Welcome the Refugees?

Gladly, Yes—*The Editors* • Sadly, No—*TRB*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

May 24, 1980 Price One Dollar

Arabs and Jews, Rights and Wrongs, Life and Death in Hebron

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TRB

from Washington
May 24, 1980

More Huddled Masses

Not since prohibition 60 years ago has lawlessness been so institutionalized as it is in American immigration law at the present time. The law isn't being enforced because, as during prohibition, the US public is divided about it. Sixty years ago America's vacillation on prohibition produced crime, rum-runners, the speakeasy, political disputes, and contempt for the Constitution. Today unwillingness to face up to a disagreeable choice is producing enormous numbers of illegal aliens, communities of cowed workers taking US jobs as unemployment grows, an exploding bilingual ethnic minority (soon expected to surpass blacks in actual numbers), political pressures, an almost silent press, and international tensions like the current Cuban refugee crisis. And, once more, contempt for the Constitution. The unfortunate stepchild US border patrol is so starved for funds that on any given eight-hour shift on the 2000-mile Mexican border only about 350 patrolmen are on duty. There has been no US immigration commissioner now for eight months. Patrol funds are so low that in certain areas vehicles are unofficially rationed to two gallons of gas for an eight-hour shift. Apprehension of illegals has dropped sharply, according to some observers. The American people have sent the lonely sentry to guard the pass and then forgotten about him.

There is an element of cruel whimsy in the situation. President Carter was irked by Iranian student demonstrations and asked for a report on all 56,000 supposed to be in this country. The immigration agency recoiled. It has been starved for years; the system isn't even computerized. And widespread irregularities were found in the several thousand documents it actually processed.

Or take the sardonic humor of the president's announcement to Cuban refugees that America will "provide an open heart and open arms." It brought a patriotic surge. Few remembered that there are currently one million (repeat, one million) foreign applicants for visas, mostly with close kin in the United States, now blocked at American consular offices round the world. Some have waited for years despite the most liberal immigration laws in the world. So Cubans enter; the waiting lists are forgotten. Instantly aroused were a bloc of 11,000 Haitians whose entrance is being decided by courts on the issue of whether they are seeking political or economic refuge.

Sooner or later America must face reality. It is going to be painful. The sealift drama of small boats bringing tens of thousands of Cuban refugees to Florida lends poignancy and urgency to the dilemma. We rejoice in the newcomers' exultation. We are a nation of refugees and immigrants.

But what America is fighting is a piece of poetry whose idealism is as tenuous today as the idealism 60 years ago of the Anti-Saloon League, which believed it could end intoxication for all time by amending the Constitution. The poetry is thrilling. It is on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. . . ." The trouble is that huddled masses need jobs. The American frontier (worse luck) is gone. When our noble boast was written, world population was 1.25 billion; now it is 4.4 billion. It grows at a rate of 172 people a minute; 90 million a year. A quarter of the world's population goes to bed hungry at night. America, and a few other industrialized countries, are islands of wealth in a sea of poverty. There are about two billion people on this shrinking planet who want what we've got, who could flood America immediately if they had the invitation and the means. It is not brutal or inhumane to say this. The amount we can help the underdeveloped nations is limited (though we still can help a great deal). Our help will be far more valuable to the teeming world if we preserve our integrity, our power, and our freedom of movement. This won't be easy. The US has only five percent of the world's population and the proportion is shrinking. We are so rich that we use one-third of all the world's energy. And the public is torn between conflicting idealisms. A Roper poll indicates that 91 percent of the public wants strict enforcement of the immigration laws. But laws are spongy, and it is exhilarating to see the refugees fleeing from Castro's Cuba. (They make cheap labor, too.)

How many illegals are there? Estimates range from three to 10 million. Guards stop a million a year; former immigration commissioner Leonard Chapman believed one or two more entered for each one caught. A prestigious Select Commission chaired by Father Hesburgh with four Cabinet members, eight congressmen, and four presidential appointees has recently made a new guess: from three to six million. Most estimates are higher.

Do illegals take US jobs? No doubt of it. This is particularly serious in a galloping recession. The *Los Angeles Times* interviewed labor secretary Ray Marshall last December. He guessed that four million illegals are in the US. "If only half, or two million, are in jobs that would otherwise be held by US workers," he said, "eliminating this displacement would bring unemployment down to 3.7 percent." (Unemployment is now seven percent.)

President Carter proposed immigration law changes to Congress in 1977 and Congress sat on its hands. There is no consensus on the subject. The United States has cut its rate of natural increase (the birth rate minus death rate) down to 0.7 percent; the world's is around 1.7 percent; Mexico, our prolific next-door neighbor, has a rate of 3.1 percent. That is why population is pressing through our back door. In Kenya, on his recent African visit, the pope rather awkwardly attacked birth control. Kenya's rate of natural increase is an extraordinary 3.9 percent, highest on the scale of the Population Reference Bureau Inc. The UN Fund for Population Activities estimates that "the world's population of four billion-plus today will increase to a total of six billion by the year 2000." Well, that's still 20 years away. Ho-hum.

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Correspondence

A Reston remark

To the editors:

When I read Stephen Chapman's criticism of James Reston ("Reston on His Laurels," *TNR*, April 19), I thought he underestimated and misunderstood Reston's work. Chapman's primary point was that Reston often functioned as a channel for official and establishment views, and that to be able to do so, he refrained from criticizing those who expressed these views to him.

I agree that Reston's column—as well as many of his articles in the news space of the *New York Times*—often have been channels for the expression of official views. And of course this occasionally has given officials the opportunity to tell the public what they want the public to believe. I don't know of any journalist or publication that has not sometimes been so used.

More than any other journalist of the last three decades, not excluding Walter Lippmann, and more than many academics and historians not burdened with daily deadlines and the onrush of events, James Reston has told this country and the world what other leaders think of them and their policies. To suggest that he has been able to do this because he is too craven to criticize misreads the reporter's craft. A reporter wins the confidence of his sources because he or she can talk to them as equals, elicit their ideas with informed questions, understand those ideas, and report them accurately. That's what James Reston does; and surely Nicholas von Hoffman did not mean it as a criticism to say of him (as quoted by Stephen Chapman): "He's less likely to change your copy than anyone else."

Reston's April 30 column is an excellent example. Reston had a private interview with Cyrus Vance before anyone else. He first reported Vance's private motives for opposing the Iranian rescue mission. That report made the implicit point that President Carter had not told the entire truth at his news conference the night before about Vance's opposition.

Chapman, in acknowledging some of Reston's major stories, barely scratched the surface; nor does he seem to have an inkling of how often *Times* news stories under other bylines—including mine—or no byline have been enriched by information only James Reston could obtain, and which he unselfishly contributed. Chapman makes no mention, moreover, of the techniques and tradecraft this canny reporter had developed over the years to make what he does look easy to the rest of us. And to those who think he has no strong views of his own, let me recommend a rereading of his article of, say, January 28—which leaves the so-called Carter Doctrine shredded with questions everyone ought to have asked.

Even in the age of Seymour Hersh and Woodward and Bernstein, not everyone is called upon to be an investigator of wrongdoing; not every journalist need be a critic; and not every columnist has to be an instant personal authority on any and everything. James Reston does what *he* does better than anyone else, which is to tell us accurately and lucidly what men like Cy Vance are thinking and saying, often when no one else can reach them or win their confidence.

I have often been the beneficiary of James Reston's help and friendship. I count that the highest honor of my personal and professional life.

Tom Wicker
The New York Times
New York, New York

Stephen Chapman replies:

My complaint about Reston is not that he isn't a muckraker, but that he fails to do even what Tim Wicker says he is best at: to "tell us accurately and lucidly what men like Cy Vance are thinking and saying." Instead he often quotes remarks that are neither interesting nor newsworthy, as in the columns I cited on Helmut Schmidt, Henry Kissinger, and Edward Kennedy. In Reston's April 30 column, the reader does find out some mildly interesting information about why Vance opposed the rescue mission, but he is also given a generous serving of pure pap. Some of the more egregious examples: "He [Vance] will be off in a few days to Antigua in the Caribbean to treat his gouty foot. . . . [he] is departing gently and even saying that his differences with the President in recent weeks have actually brought them closer together personally. . . . He had every opportunity to state his opposition to the President privately and to argue against the raid in the Cabinet." Reston's faults might be excused if he were actually a source of important information about what high officials really think, but usually they tell him only what will serve their own ends, whether it is true or false, important or trivial. Reston obligingly reports it all.

I would have welcomed the chance to hear Tom Wicker's view before I wrote the piece. He, however, refused to return my calls.

To the editors:

The nastiest little piece of writing I have encountered in recent years is Stephen Chapman's failed effort to pillory James Reston for an assortment of alleged sins, including "advancing age," "gentlemanliness," "dearth of ideas," and "pet themes." Reston, like all the rest of us, has his bad days and his good days, and even his most avid followers no doubt find some occasional deficiencies in his weekly offerings. But it is the unremitting sliminess of Chapman's attack that compels questions about the author's motivation: envy, chronic dyspepsia, delusion of omniscience? Now that he has loosed his gratuitous dart, let us hope that Chapman will repair once again to the dank and fetid recesses beneath the rock from which he recently crawled; and more power to that rock, which by supplying such a compatible environment has induced Chapman to stay at home more often than not, alone with his dark ruminations.

Richard H. Robinson Jr.
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Tenneco holdings

To the editors:

In his April 26 column, TRB mistakenly said that Tenneco Inc. owns Holiday Inns. Tenneco currently has no interest in, nor has it ever had an interest in, Holiday Inns.

William P. Sanford Jr.
Director of Investor Relations
Tenneco Inc.
Houston, Texas

The Senate's choice for VP

To the editors:

"The Tip O'Neill Option" by Lawrence White in the May 3 issue of *TNR* is incorrect or, at the very least, incomplete. In the event there is no majority in the electoral college to elect a president and vice president, the presidential determination is made in the House of Representatives among the three top contenders. But "from the two highest numbers on the list, the

(continued on page 39)

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Cover: The Tomb of Abner, King David's general, at Hebron. Photograph by Hilla and Max Jacoby from The Land of Israel *(Thames and Hudson). Article on page 18.*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

May 24, 1980

A Half-Opened Door

When Fidel Castro announced in April that anyone who wanted to leave Cuba for the United States was free to go, he presented President Carter with a grand opportunity. The president could have gone on national television that night to declare that he welcomed all Cubans fleeing communist oppresssion. He could have instructed the Immigration and Naturalization Service to enforce no laws that would impede the transport of Cubans from Mariel Bay to Key West. He could have advised Castro that the US would send planes and ships to carry those Cubans wishing to leave. He could have sent a message to Congress urging the quick passage of special legislation to provide blanket asylum to all Cuban refugees. Bold measures like these would have dramatically enhanced American prestige throughout the globe and exposed once and for all the widespread misery in Castro's Cuba. They also would have served the interests of simple humanity.

But that was not the policy chosen by the president. For weeks the president could not decide on any policy at all. The course he has followed has been confused and confusing. When Castro invited the discontented to leave Cuba, he obviously hoped to force the US into the embarrassing position of refusing to accept them. The administration promptly obliged by announcing that it would strictly enforce all immigration laws, which provide for up to two years in jail and a fine of $1000 for anyone transporting illegal aliens into the country, and deportation for anyone illegally entering. There was even talk that the Coast Guard might prevent any refugee boats from landing on American shore. It was just as Castro wanted: he looked like the liberator, the US like the oppressor.

Only the intervention of Providence forced the president to soften his harsh position. When storms threatened hundreds of passengers on the "freedom flotilla," Carter ordered the Coast Guard to concentrate on getting the boats safely to the US, rather than have the Straits of Florida turned into a mass grave. But still the White House stood by its pledge to accept only 3500 of the 10,000 Cubans who took refuge in the Peruvian Embassy in Havana. Finally on May 5, Carter did what he should have done at the outset: he declared that the US would "provide an open heart and open arms to refugees seeking freedom from communist domination and from the economic deprivation brought about primarily by Fidel Castro and his government."

But just as quickly as he had rolled out the red carpet, the president pulled it back. Last week Carter announced that the administration would redouble its enforcement of immigration laws, including heavy fines on boat owners bringing refugees to Florida (600 have been fined already) and seizure of their vessels. He also said the US would accept only those Cubans with close relatives here, those who have been subject to political persecution, and those who have taken refuge in the Peruvian Embassy. The administration also said those Cubans already here will have to meet the eligibility requirements in the current law, which most of them do not. Apparently the president is prepared to expel thousands of the refugees. His only concession was to promise an airlift and sealift for those Cubans still in Cuba who do qualify. But Castro probably won't cooperate.

In its handling of this emergency, the administration has lacked both courage and vision. But Congress is also capable of timidity and small-minded meanness. Carter's announcement came only a day after Representative Elizabeth Holtzman of New York, chairman of the House Immigration Subcommittee, held hearings on the matter. Her message: slam the the door on the Cubans. Holtzman, of course, put it more delicately, stressing the "staggering" implications of admitting those arriving in a "massive and chaotic rush to our shores," arguing that the Cubans should be treated no differently from refugees from right-wing dictatorships, and noting the "disturbingly high rates of venereal disease and tuberculosis" among the refugees. She also urged a "moratorium" on boat departures to Cuba, negotiations with Castro to "establish a regular and orderly means of departure from Cuba for family members and political prisoners," and a commitment by the administration that "no one who does not meet the

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refugee definition [under current law] should be granted refugee status." The next day Holtzman got most of what she wanted. Thanks to Carter's pitiless new policy, thousands of Cubans trying to get out will be stranded with no assurance of getting out later. Thousands more with no family ties in the US and no record of political persecution will be barred. And most of the refugees already here may be expelled, since they do not meet the strict definition of refugees. This is humanitarianism carefully rationed.

What Holtzman and Carter propose is a strict adherence to the Refugee Act of 1980, signed into law only two months ago, which made several changes in American immigration policy. The most notable was a new definition of refugees. Under the old law, anyone fleeing a communist country automatically qualified for asylum. The new law provides that only people subject to, or threatened by, political, racial, or religious persecution can qualify for admission as refugees, regardless of whether they come from communist countries or right-wing dictatorships. If the intent had been to grant those fleeing right-wing oppression the same welcome as those fleeing left-wing oppression, the change would have been wise. But now it appears that the goal was to keep out both. The act also repealed the authority of the attorney general to grant "parole" status to illegal immigrants, which has been used to admit groups who don't qualify otherwise. Since the parole authority did not expire until May 15, the president could have used it to admit the Cubans, but he did not.

The Refugee Act itself is a mixed bag. It does provide for a modest but welcome increase in the number of immigrants to be admitted each year, and it does give the president the authority to raise the number that can be admitted as refugees. The problem is the act's narrow definition of refugees. Limiting our compassion to those who are victimized directly by persecution is neither realistic nor humane. It means giving the back of our hand to millions who are oppressed in other ways—by war, by ordinary totalitarian constraints, or by simple economic deprivation. One need not be a political prisoner to be a victim of a tyrannical government.

There has been much talk, by both Holtzman and the White House, of the menace presented by diseased or criminal Cubans. But most of this is only demagoguery, with unmistakable tinges of racism. Similar accusations have been used to keep out immigrants in the past—first Jews and Southern Europeans, later the Vietnamese. No doubt a disproportionately large number of the Cubans are ill, thanks to the state of medical care in Cuba. But Carter and Holtzman know that even repellent illnesses like venereal disease and tuberculosis can be cured easily in the US. The rumors of boatloads of vicious criminals and mental patients being unloaded at Key West lack much evidence. Most of the "criminals," according to the administration, are guilty of only political crimes or petty offenses that would not be classified as felonies here. So far only 421 of the 37,000 refugees have been found to have serious criminal records, and only a handful are mentally ill. The former, of course, should be sent back to Cuba; the latter we probably can afford to place in American institutions. Obviously it would be nice if Castro would send us only doctors and lawyers. But the "undesirables" are a small price to pay for the freedom of thousands of Cubans.

Another argument against letting in the Cubans (or anyone else) is that they will aggravate unemployment. In the very short run they may, but in the long run they won't. The unemployment rate among Vietnamese immigrants, who came to the US facing much greater cultural and linguistic barriers than the Cubans, is very low. Miami, which absorbed most of the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who came to the US after Castro's revolution, has not suffered discernibly from the influx; in fact, experts credit the Cubans with actually stimulating the local economy. The reason is that the Cubans who come are precisely those who are most ambitious and eager to work.

As TRB argues this week, there are problems in allowing unlimited immigration to the US. Senator Kennedy thinks that if we admit all the Cubans, we also should admit the Haitians who have come here illegally. The Haitians, however, are a tougher case—not because they are black, but because the Haitian government is less oppressive than Castro's, because they apparently are in no danger if they are sent back, and because they are coming mainly for economic reasons. But the Cuban refugees, after all, had every reason to expect they would be welcomed here, due to our long-standing policy of encouraging Cuban immigration. Returning them would place them in certain danger. Granted, most of them also have come for economic reasons. But this is also a chance for the US to score a major propaganda victory, which is nothing to sneeze at these days. It may be impossible to let in everyone in the world who would like to come to the US. But we can and should let in the Cubans.

Gas enveloped 'Death of a Princess.'

Apologies, PBS-Style

Conservatives were calling for government intervention and censorship. Liberals were willing, even eager, to offend a third world nation. Knock-your-block-off militarists were saying we should kowtow to a power with the same size army as Belgium's. And lawyers for the Public Broadcasting Service were in court in Texas, arguing that free speech meant the right to keep the public from seeing PBS's controversial television film.

Probably the high point of craziness over the investigative thriller "Death of a Princess" came when

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self-righteous Harvard diplomatist Roger Fisher said in a broadcast follow-up discussion that the Saudis are "too liberal" and lenient in squelching dissent. They ought, he said, to be executing more people instead of just throwing them in jail. He was joined by other Arab apologists, one of whom achieved the ultimate in cultural relativism by saying, "we have to be very careful not to see things in our own terms."

Sharon Percy Rockefeller, board member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and leading advocate of the Equal Rights Amendment, joined the drive to suppress a film about the submission of Saudi women. Mobil Oil, the leading corporate complainer about commercial television's resistance to controversy, took out an ad, first in the *New York Times* and later in the *Washington Post* and *Boston Globe*, saying the film should be banned because it had too controversial a point of view. Henry Becton, general manager of WGBH Channel 2 in Boston, which produced both the film and the hour of follow-up, agreed that the second show was grossly biased but said that had been its primary objective. "We wanted to give access to other points of view, specifically the Arab point of view."

But in all the furor no one ever proved the show was factually wrong in any significant way. Nor did anyone try. The issue was never whether "Death of a Princess" was good theater, good journalism, or good analysis of the Arab mind. The issue was whether we dared risk annoying the Saudis and having them cut off our oil. And the answer seemed to be "no" to a frightening number of people.

The show that caused all this furor—and that earlier had caused the Saudis to send home Britain's ambassador and to threaten an oil cutoff in the Netherlands—never claimed to probe the Saudi psyche. It was a story of doomed love, of crime and punishment, and of a Western journalist's search for facts in a mystic story-book world. Even the harshest Saudi critics conceded most of it was true.

The film began, on screen and in its creation, with the execution on July 15, 1977, of a Saudi princess, granddaughter to an elder brother of the king, and of her alleged lover. In the months that followed, British filmmaker Anthony Thomas conducted dozens of interviews. He concluded that the princess was probably killed without the trial or confession required by Islamic law; that her lover was also unjustly executed; and that Saudi royal women are prone to react to confinement and denial of education and jobs by undertaking Byzantine sex lives, capped by cruises through the desert in search of lovers.

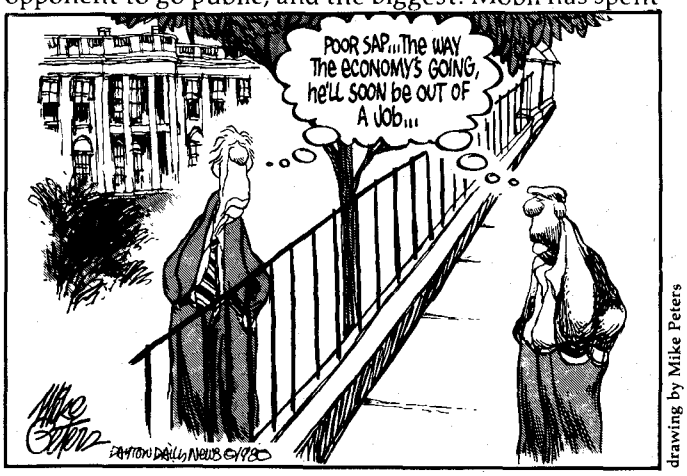
Although the illegal executions might seem most jarring to Western audiences, the Saudis barely murmured about that. Their main concern, as they made clear through their mouthpiece, former US ambassador James Akins, was the claim of sexual license, and its underlying implication that the ruling family does not obey the law it uses to suppress everyone else. The designated Saudi spokesman, Clovis Maksoud, the Arab League's observer at the UN, dwelt on dialogue about Arabs having to be schizophrenics, pulling it out of context and implying the film said Islam was a form of mental illness.

The Saudi discontent was, on the whole, rather mild. They never publicly threatened retaliation against the US. They denounced the film as an attack on Islam—which it was, at least on their mode of it—and asked for more understanding and sympathetic treatment. Maksoud and other Arab apologists even said "Death of a Princess" might have been all right if it were one of 50 films about Saudi life, though they never explained how reporters and filmmakers were to research the other 49 in a country where government agents accompany journalists everywhere.

The unpredictable, and scary, part of the story was the reaction of Americans. Thousands of ordinary citizens telephoned PBS and its member stations to warn of "World War III" or "another oil embargo." The calls were four or five to one against airing the show. Although some came from organized campaigns, "most were from individuals speaking sincerely," said PBS president Larry Grossman. "A lot of them said we had few enough friends in the world and couldn't afford to lose another."

South Carolina's PBS stations, a state-owned educational network, banned the show but wouldn't say why. PBS insiders said the network was pressured by former governor John West, now US ambassador to Saudi Arabia. The Houston station, a branch of the public university system, dropped the show and said outright it didn't want to offend the Saudis. A federal judge ordered the station to air the show because its decision was "improper" and so was the procedure used to make it, but then a three-judge panel overruled him and upheld the ban. The Houston channel substituted "The Importance of Being Ernest." A subsidiary outlet in Los Angeles, owned by the public schools, first scheduled and then canceled the show, again without saying why. The same happened in Florida.

Rumors were rife that stations were being pressured by corporate sponsors of public television, by local corporations doing business with the Saudis, and even by some government officials. Mobil was the first opponent to go public, and the biggest. Mobil has spent



drawing by Mike Peters

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$30 million on PBS shows since discontinuing its gasoline ads on commercial television after the oil shortage. In its newspaper ads, Mobil claimed PBS was in effect an arm of government and that the First Amendment guarantee of free speech carries an implicit burden of "responsibility." That would surely surprise Thomas Jefferson, who knew only a nasty, brawling, partisan press when he wrote the guarantee.

Mobil's ad also repeated charges by Penelope Mortimer, an assistant on the film, that with three exceptions "every interview and every character in the film is fabricated." The statement is literally true. Even Thomas himself was renamed, in the interest of stressing that this was a drama rather than a documentary. But the story was carefully researched and was produced for PBS's "World" series, which has had a persistent bias for, not against, the third world. The characters and interviews were fabricated to protect identities. The show was a drama because few of the characters would have appeared in a documentary, and the title character was dead. Mobil knew all that but preferred to distort to protect its interest in the Arabian American Oil Company, Aramco. Another Aramco partner, Exxon, which spends four million dollars a year on public TV, nearly as much as Mobil, said it had been contacted by the Saudis and in turn had pressured the State Department. Standard Oil of California said PBS was "exercising poor judgment." Texaco, a fourth Aramco partner, had no comment.

Acting Secretary of State Warren Christopher urged PBS to give "appropriate consideration" to the Saudis, and provide "a full and balanced presentation." Representative Clement Zablocki, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and William S. Broomfield, ranking Republican, urged flatly that it not be shown. So did Barry Goldwater.

The ruckus made the show a hit where it aired. It drew half the total audience in Boston, a quarter in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Grossman said it was "unquestionably and by far the most successful program we have ever aired in terms of audience appeal." Even the follow-up discussion, a panel of talking heads, drew big-city audience shares ranging from 12 to 40 percent. And the telephone calls during and after the show switched, predictably, to five-to-one in favor.

That happened despite the follow-up discussion, which may have been the most disreputable aspect of the whole affair. PBS refused to kowtow to the Saudis by canceling the show. Instead it kowtowed to the Arabs and their influential friends by staging an hour of apology for being American, white, Western, and industrial.

Five of the six panelists were at least occasional shills for the Saudis; the sixth was a journalist who confined himself mostly to discussing the difficulties of reporting in Saudi Arabia. No one spoke for progress. No one spoke for human rights. No one questioned the legitimacy of a state religion that everyone must obey. Even Grossman said "nobody shed any light or perspective or intelligence" about religion in Saudi society or how much Saudi suppression of women is a necessary and legitimate part of Islam. (In the midst of the battle the Saudis revoked the right of women to study or travel abroad.)

The panel included a Moslem clergyman, Maksoud, Fisher, and three journalists. Judith Kipper of the American Enterprise Institute said that if Moslem women wanted to change themselves they could. Peter Iseman, a habitual apologist for the Saudis whose career depends on access to the country, started lobbying weeks beforehand to appear on the follow-up as a means of promoting his forthcoming book. He dismissed the murder of the princess by saying, "Honor, especially where a woman is involved, is a very touchy thing." British writer Andrew Duncan compared Saudi Arabia to Russia for secrecy. He said the Saudi royal family is hypocritical and must modernize or be overthrown. But even he urged that barbaric societies be treated as respectfully as democracies, blaming Saudi hostility on excessive trade with former imperial powers in the West. It's always somehow our fault.

William A. Henry III

William A. Henry III is television critic of the *Boston Globe*. He recently won the 1980 Pulitzer Prize for criticism.

Politics

Recasting Ronnie

Who is Ronald Reagan, anyway? Is he a lightweight ex-movie actor, a hip-shooting right-wing ideologue, the champion of extremist anti-abortionists, anti-feminists, anti-communists, and gun nuts, a menace to domestic tranquillity and world peace? Is he, to consider another set of stereotypes, a decent, principled conservative who's simply not bright enough—and possibly too lazy—to be president, who'd be led easily by the superhawks, oilmen, economic faddists, and corporate moguls he probably would choose to advise him? Or is Reagan really a moderate, a populist, a pragmatic administrator and conciliator—a man gifted with good judgment about people and an instinctive grasp of complicated issues—who has deeply grounded himself in global strategy and economics?

I don't know who Reagan is, and I suspect much of the voting public doesn't either, in spite of his presence on the political scene for these many years. And I suspect that the electorate's search for a definition of Ronald Reagan—and the competing efforts of the Carter and Reagan campaigns to affect the process—

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will occupy much of the presidential campaign. It's entirely possible that Reagan will pass muster fully and that the electorate will concentrate on his proposals and Carter's record. But the Carter forces already are trying to maximize the possibility that Reagan will become the main issue of the whole campaign. If that happens, it could be fatal to Reagan.

At the moment, there would seem to be little reason for Reagan to worry. His polls are up, and Carter's are down. The latest ABC-Harris results show Reagan leading Carter 39 to 33, with 23 percent for John Anderson. In March, ABC-Harris showed Carter and Reagan tied at 39 percent, with 22 percent for Anderson. Gallup still shows Carter ahead in a two-way race, 47 to 43, but in January and February, Carter led by 29 points, not four. The polls show Carter sliding again in his approval ratings, too. Despite public support for Carter's Iran rescue attempt, Gallup shows only 47 percent now approve of the president's handling of the Iran crisis, compared to 76 percent in December. Carter's overall job-approval rating is 43 percent, according to Gallup, down from 61 percent in December. The latest Harris results show that only 34 percent approve of Carter's handling of foreign policy, only 31 percent say he inspires confidence in the White House, and only 17 percent support his economic policy. These figures are not as low as they were during the Carter doldrums last summer and fall, but they are heading in that direction.

Meanwhile, most of Reagan's signs are up. A May ABC-Harris poll shows that the age issue is fading fast as a concern to voters and that Reagan is becoming an increasingly respected figure on the political scene. By 53 to 42, voters think Reagan has the leadership characteristics to be president. A huge majority—69 to 26—believes Reagan is right to push for less government and more free enterprise, and a similar percentage rejects the notion that he is too close to big business.

There is evidence from primary results and opinion polls that Reagan can pick either a southern strategy in November or a northern industrial-state strategy and beat Carter either way. Reagan starts out with a western base of 109 electoral votes, assuming he carries his home state of California, which Gerald Ford did in 1976, and where polls show him leading Carter by 12 points even with Anderson in the race. To get the 270 electoral votes needed to win, Reagan can devote his money and time either to attempting to steal the South from Jimmy Carter, or heading north into traditional Democratic states that seem disaffected from the Democratic incumbent. Sweeping the South, except for Georgia, would net Reagan another 135 votes, bringing him just 26 away from victory. Reagan's conservatism makes him attractive in the South, and the region may well feel disappointed by native son Carter. In fact, the Harris poll shows Reagan now leading Carter among southern states, 50 to 40. Other encouraging evidence for Reagan: Republican voter turnouts in early southern primaries this year increased substantially over 1976 turnouts, while Democratic participation declined. The message apparently was that voters were eager to make an effort to help Reagan (who swept his party's southern primaries), but not Carter.

Reagan's other option is to concentrate on the big northeastern and midwestern industrial states—especially Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, worth a total of 95 electoral votes—and add on Texas, with 26, and Florida, with 17. These six states, with 138 electoral votes, plus the West, would leave Reagan only 23 short of election, which he might collect in the South, Midwest, or even New England. Reagan's advisers are encouraged to adopt the industrial state strategy by their man's impressive primary performance among blue-collar voters—1968 George Wallace supporters, plus a new batch of younger middle-income workers who never have voted before. The Harris poll shows that union members now favor Reagan by a point, 38 to 37. That is a big reversal from results this March, which showed Carter 15 points ahead among union members. A northern strategy also seems safer for Reagan, since a Carter recovery, if it comes, probably would occur soonest among his neighbors and friends, and because Carter has retained the allegiance of southern blacks more than any other single group.

Despite all his advantages, Reagan could lose the election, especially if he proves to be the man his enemies portray: a rigid ideologue, a hip-shooter, or a dummy. Somehow, for example, Reagan might contrive to destroy the Republican unity that has prevailed through the primary season, possibly through reigniting ill-feelings between Reagan and Ford that have been smoldering since 1976. Some Reagan partisans believe that Ford is behind George Bush's refusal to accept defeat. They are resentful that the Republican convention was timed to start on Ford's birthday, in Ford's home state, with a Ford speech—all without any guarantee from Ford that he will rally behind the Reagan banner. The Reagan forces have little right to complain, since Reagan was unenthusiastic about supporting Ford in 1976. But the resentment still could break out openly. Victorious Reagan forces might vent their vindictiveness against a scapegoat such as Republican chairman Bill Brock, denying him the opportunity to conclude the impressive party-rebuilding program he has initiated.

Another potential area for blunder is the selection of a Reagan running mate. Will he choose Howard Baker, a Washington insider and moderate, possibly the best qualified presidential candidate in either party this year? To do so would show Reagan to be a pragmatist, but open him to right-wing charges of abandoning conservative principles, since Baker supported the Panama Canal treaties and opposes the proposed constitutional amendment to ban abortions. If Reagan chooses, say, Jack Kemp, he will please the right, but raise questions about his pragmatism and moderation.

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Picking Richard Lugar, Richard Thornburgh, or James Thompson might be safe, but not very imaginative. The safest choice of all might be George Bush, whose Boy Scout qualities would make him a perfect vice president, but it would raise legitimate questions about Reagan's judgment.

Reagan also may suffer from an inability to clarify his policy agenda. Reagan's basic themes are clear—less government, lower taxes, more defense, and a return to basic social values. They have served him well in the GOP primaries, but there he's been among friends (John Anderson excepted) who have raised few questions about what it all means. Soon Reagan will have to spell it out, and that may cause trouble. The Harris poll indicates that voters disagree with Reagan, 46 percent to 43, that taxes can be cut 30 percent without producing inflationary budget deficits. Last week, Reagan campaign manager William Casey indicated that Reagan might back away from the exact terms of the Kemp-Roth plan—30 percent tax cuts over three years—but maintain the "principle" of phased-in deep cuts to revitalize the economy. This would be a pragmatic, conciliatory way to meet the objections of conventional economists and the electorate, and would indicate that Reagan is not the intellectual prisoner of Jack Kemp, Arthur Laffer, and other economic true believers.

The conventional wisdom is that John Anderson's candidacy will hurt Carter more than Reagan, but no less formidable a political analyst than John Sears, Reagan's deposed campaign manager, thinks that Anderson could hurt Reagan, too. In fact, Sears says that the political climate is right for an Anderson victory in November, if Anderson can capitalize on it. Sears's theory is that Anderson could attract not only liberal suburbanites and independents, but also Bush supporters, if he tailors his message correctly, thereby inflicting severe damage on Reagan.

But Reagan's principal vulnerability will be his own record over the past 16 years, and what the Democrats can make of it. Sears observed that as Carter sinks lower in the polls, public attention inevitably will focus on Reagan, just as it did on Edward Kennedy when he was leading Carter last fall. This fall, voters will ask themselves: what kind of president will Reagan make? And, again, who is Ronald Reagan, anyway?

Last week William Casey and other top Reagan campaign officials began in earnest to make the case that their man not only had been a competent governor of California, but had "turned the state around." Not only is Reagan intelligent, pragmatic, and middle-of-the-road, Casey told reporters at a Godfrey Sperling breakfast, but "very much an intellectual," based on his willingness to read lengthy campaign documents. Another Reagan aide concurred. "Reagan is an intellectual in an offbeat sort of way. He masks it instead of flaunting it. He's a man who doesn't speak in cosmic terms, but he is a deep thinker and heavy reader. Even his idle hours are spent in the pursuit of knowledge." What about Reagan's admission that he doesn't read books? "Who does?" said this aide, who happens to have a PhD. "I buy them but I don't have time to read them, either." According to his aides, Reagan thinks, can quiz and rebut any of his foreign policy or economic experts, and knows more about the world than Jimmy Carter. If he's elected, they say, he will not charge off on risky new initiatives or enunciate grand new doctrines, but will be steady, "conservative in the classic sense," and safe. Listening to them, you would think these Reaganites were talking about Dwight D. Eisenhower. I suspect they would like that image to stick.

At Carter-Mondale headquarters, however, campaign research chief Martin Franks has other ideas. "It reminds me of the attempt to invent a 'new Nixon' in 1968," said Franks, "but I've got a whole book full of quotes to show that Reagan is certainly no intellectual." Franks is also gathering material to dispute the Reagan claim that he was a sensational governor of California and his aides' claim that Reagan is a moderate. Presumably the Carter campaign is saving its best material for later, but a sampling is instructive. Clips from the *Los Angeles Times* suggest that Reagan is not just exaggerating his tax-cut record from California, but misrepresenting it. Reagan accumulated tax money, it turns out, because he imposed some of the heaviest tax increases in state history, producing a huge surplus. Other items in the Democrats' files raise questions about Reagan's consistency. He favored a grain embargo against the Soviet Union last September, at the time of the Cuban brigade mini-crisis, but opposed it in January, after the invasion of Afghanistan. Then there are the well-known "misstatements": that Alaska has more oil than Saudi Arabia, that Reagan is younger than almost all the leaders of the world except Margaret Thatcher, that Vietnam veterans aren't getting benefits from the GI bill. Are these just gaps in information, or do they indicate either a deep-down ignorance of important issues, a tendency to talk without thinking, or both? Polls show that the electorate is concerned about this. Harris shows that people agree by 68 to 27 percent that Reagan "seems to make too many off-the-cuff remarks which he then has trouble explaining or has to apologize for." If the Carter-Mondale campaign has its way, Reagan will spend the whole campaign explaining and apologizing.

Some of Reagan's old statements do, in fact, suggest insensitivity, right-wingism, stupidity. In 1975, for instance, when Patty Hearst's kidnappers demanded her family provide free food to the poor, Reagan's reaction was, "It's just too bad we can't have an

Coming:
Tad Szulc on the
Democratization of Brazil.

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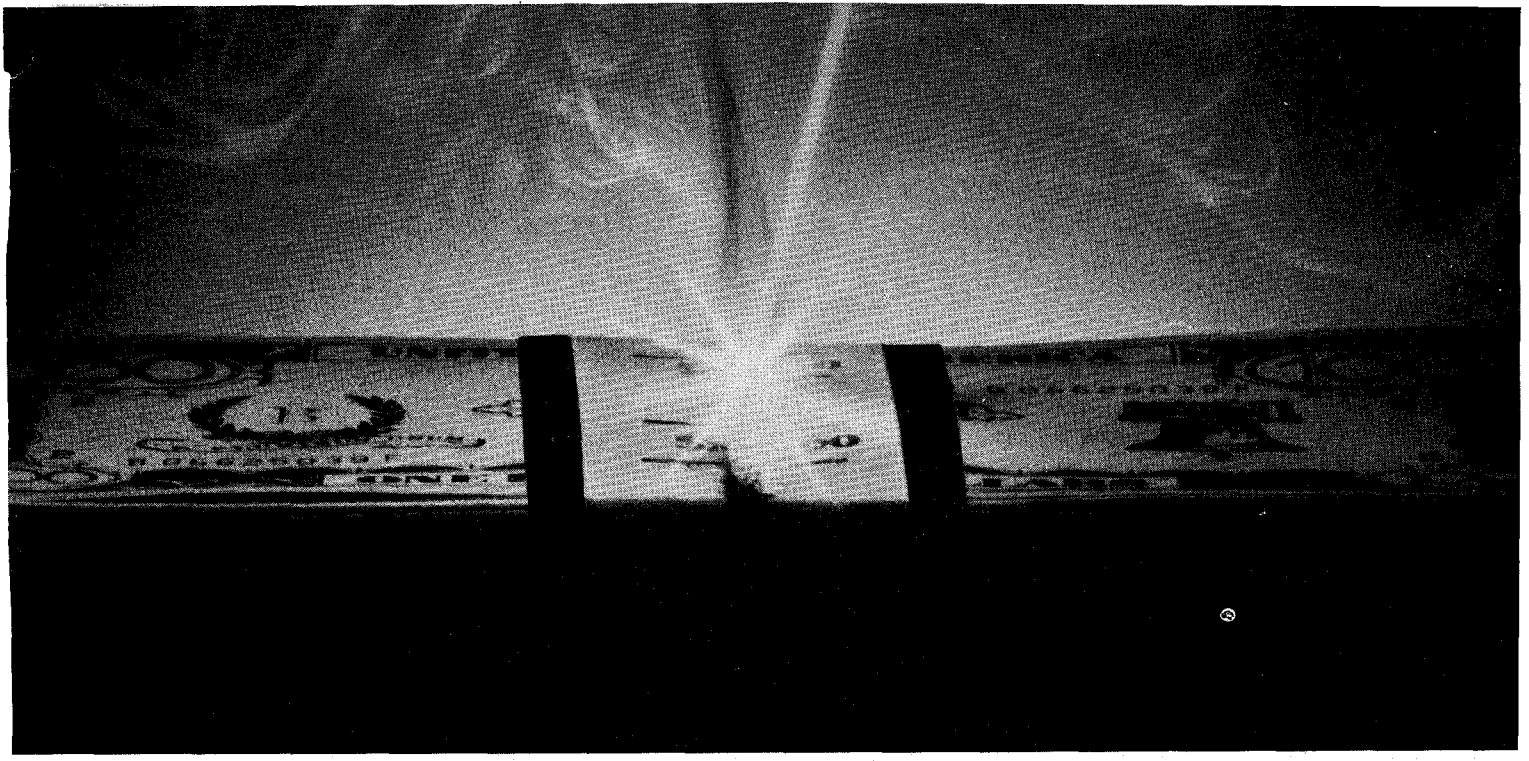

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And these lasers are paying off – with better products manufactured for the Bell System at lower costs.

Light of the future

Even with these uses, Western Electric has only begun to tap the laser's potential for telecommunications.

More applications are on the way. And they will bring more savings, more and better products made with laser technology.

Using lasers to cut costs is just one innovation from the Engineering Research Center. The Center's research in manufacturing techniques is an important part of Western Electric's total commitment to using the latest and the best in technology to keep the cost of your phone service down.

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epidemic of botulism." In 1979, he told the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* that "property rights and freedom are inseparable. I believe that in a variety of ways, through environmental controls, through such things as OSHA, the government is trying to minimize ownership of private property in this country." There is a long record of anti-welfare statements from the 1960s that sound anti-poor, and this juicy one from 1963: "The entire [graduated income tax] structure was created by Karl Marx. It has no justification in getting government needed revenue."

William Casey points out that the Republican National Committee has a whole book on Jimmy Carter, too, filled with examples of unfulfilled promises and policy reversals. Casey is right in claiming that Carter's policy failures have done the country more harm than Reagan's misstatements. And he is probably right in saying that Carter, lacking a positive record to run on, will have to rely on a nasty negative campaign against Reagan. But the fact is that this country does not know who or what Ronald Reagan actually is, while it thinks it knows Jimmy Carter to be a decent, moral, honest man, if slightly inept. I happen to think that the country is wrong about Carter—that he's devious as well as inept—but the point is that there's a good chance that Reagan could become the issue of 1980, not Carter's performance. In that case, we could see Jimmy Carter roar from behind once again and get himself reelected.

Morton Kondracke

Dr. Pangloss orchestrated the script.

Bigwig Optimism

Hot Springs, Virginia

It was the kind of weekend made to order for left-wing conspiracy buffs. Here, gathered in one room, were the robber barons of the 1980s—men like Clinton Garvin of Exxon, David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan, Thomas Murphy of General Motors, Reg Jones of General Electric, and Irving Shapiro of DuPont.

The setting was The Homestead, the kind of southern resort that explains why Robert E. Lee kept fighting. The occasion was the May 8-10 quarterly meeting of the Business Council, the Skull and Bones of corporate America. The verdict of the more than 100 business leaders present was that the recession was a good thing; it would teach the country the virtues of supply-side economics and a balanced budget.

The three-day affair was largely social, with the afternoons free for golf and tennis and the evenings reserved for black-tie dinners. Each morning a steady stream of government officials, including Paul Volcker and Charles Schultze, addressed the closed-door sessions.

The titans of industry were even self-confident enough to listen to Lane Kirkland, the president of the AFL-CIO. But this historic break with tradition went only skin deep. Late one evening, a corporate chieftain was overheard in the bar saying, in a tone normally reserved for praising one's butler, "Lane Kirkland conducted himself superbly."

The Business Council might seem sinister if it weren't so dull. How can you worry about a group of men who, after spending years clawing their way to the top, spent Friday evening listening to a speech by Dixie Lee Ray, the pro-nuke governor of Washington? They loved her. David Rockefeller said, "She was the best speaker in 10 years and that includes my brother, Nelson." One corporate wife gushed, "I'm going to send a copy to each of my five children." A lonely dissent came from Lane Kirkland, who called the speech "primitive capitalism."

But the corporate big shots also had to listen to the likes of education czar Shirley Hufstedler, who declaimed, in part, that "due to changing demographics and stagflation, the synergistic impact of the education system flowing into the industrial system is breaking apart. . . . The private sector has to intervene with a number of interventions beginning in junior high school. . . . If we are going to have synergism continue, the private sector has to get into the business of developing innovative structures and assist in a variety of joint-venturing."

The Homestead was the perfect setting for this revival of the McKinley administration. It is the kind of resort that a generation or so ago banned blacks and Jews. Gentlemen still must wear jackets and ties in the long, sweeping antebellum lobby after seven p.m. Over the years, however, standards have declined slowly. Many of the faithful black retainers have been replaced by servants who speak English with a distinct Jamaican lilt and the fine old families of the South have been supplanted by a convention trade that caters to the Wholesale Beer Distributors of Virginia and the Northern Virginia Dental Study Clinic.

But twice a year, with the arrival of the Business Council, the old days are miraculously revived. As the tennis pro, Princeton class of '74, put it, "You can always tell when these guys are here. On Thursday, when they arrive, the sky is dark with corporate jets."

The Business Council, whose roots go back to the 1930s, should not be confused with other groups like the Business Roundtable and the Chamber of Commerce, which do tacky things like lobby and take political positions. It is an exclusive group, limited to 65 active members, all chief executives of major corporations. Their ranks are fleshed out with a number of corporate retirees who give a distinct geriatric flavor to the organization. Leaving one of the black-tie dinners, an outsider calculated that "there were exactly four

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Democrats and two Jews in the room."

The Business Council has always specialized in keeping reporters in their place. Until 1950, the organization, which used to hold its meetings at the Cloisters on Sea Island, Georgia, barred reporters from the entire island. That policy was changed in 1950 when a greenhorn from UPI sent a story over the wire that claimed the purpose of the meeting was to divvy up Korean War contracts. The furor over that erroneous story caused the first breach in the secrecy that traditionally surrounded these meetings.

These days, the 25 reporters roaming the halls are limited to press conferences by each of the major speakers and a Thursday night briefing on the organization's economic outlook. This year the Council predicted "a recession pattern about as severe as any in the postwar period except 1974-75." But when you heard the corporate leaders explain the forecast Thursday night, it was as if Dr. Pangloss had orchestrated the script. Thomas Murphy of General Motors somehow divined that auto sales would top the 10 million mark this year and 11 million in 1981. Clinton Garvin of Exxon said, with a straight face, "If I were the Japanese car boys, I'd be worried about 1981." Reg Jones of General Electric thought the big news was that the sales of small appliances were holding firm, not the declines in "big-ticket items." Henry Henley, who heads a clothing conglomerate, found it just peachy that men were buying shirts and ties instead of suits and sport jackets.

Now, corporate strategists always suggest that the recession is happening to the other guy. But something deeper is needed to explain the persistent cheerfulness of the business community. Something like the joyous feeling that, in these days of high inflation and low productivity, business has suddenly become the good guy on the block.

Chatting in the lobby of The Homestead, DuPont's Irving Shapiro—no relation—pointed to straws in the wind "like the *New Republic* running an editorial saying that profits are a good thing. The mood in this country is changing. Business is no longer seen as an evil. The country recognizes that we have talents and things to contribute."

If anyone should have been bemoaning his fate, it's Lewis Foy of Bethlehem Steel, a company whose orders fell by 25 percent in March. Instead, Foy, too, was upbeat. "We are hopeful that the recession will be manageable," Foy said. "There is a recognition what a disease inflation is. And they're also learning that more effort is needed on the productive side and less on the consumptive side of the economy. We've been saying this for half a dozen years, but it's very beneficial that people are beginning to listen."

Walter Shapiro

Walter Shapiro is a contributing editor of the *Washington Post Magazine* and an accomplished junketeer.

The conservative money offensive.

How to Bury Liberals

As the number of political action committees (PACs) continues to explode, so does their ability to influence elections and legislation. Since 1975, when the Federal Election Commission ruled corporate PACs legal, their number has increased roughly 1000 percent—from 89 to 954. Trade association PACs (such as the American Medical Association's) have more than doubled in number during the same period, from 357 to 816. By contrast, labor union PACs, which have been legal for decades, have remained constant in number since 1974, at about 240.

The enormous increase in the number of corporate and trade PACs represents two major threats to liberal policies and politicians: first, through sheer numbers, conservative PACs are now greatly outspending labor union PACs, often endangering liberal Democrats in Congress; and second, these donations are jeopardizing pro-consumer legislation across a whole range of issues. Corporate and trade PACs contributed more than twice as much as labor union PACs to 1978 congressional campaigns, and are sure to do so by an even greater margin this year. While political contributions may not directly buy votes in Congress, they do allow access and influence. PAC donations already have shifted many crucial committee and floor votes against consumers.

Political action committees are a perfectly legitimate method for any interest group to funnel money toward the election of candidates in House, Senate, and presidential races. However, the rules on how much a candidate may accept from PACs differ substantially according to the office being sought. There are no limits on how much a candidate for a House or Senate seat may accept from PACs. Nor are there any limits on how much such candidates may spend on their election campaigns. By contrast, presidential candidates may not accept any funds from PACs once they are the nominees of their party. During the primary season, presidential contenders may accept any amount of PAC monies, but these cannot be counted toward matching federal funds. There also are strict limits on how much can be spent in any one state for primaries or caucuses.

Actual spending by individual PACs is limited to $5000 per candidate per election—which, in practice, means $10,000 for a primary and a general election. Since each PAC can give every Senate and House candidate $10,000, this means that every PAC can funnel up to $90 million to candidates in an election year (435 House seats and 30 Senate seats, each with at least two candidates). With 2000 PACs now in existence, this would mean $180 billion in donations every election year. The total cost of all federal elections in 1976, including the presidential campaigns, was $212 million.

In addition to their impact on political campaigns,

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PACs are influencing the political process through advertising and direct-mail solicitations. "Non-connected" or ideological PACs have become increasingly powerful as their budgets have grown in the last few years. *Congressional Quarterly* reported that "Ronald Reagan's PAC," Citizens for the Republic, spent $4.5 million during the 1977-78 election cycle. Similarly, the National Conservative Political Action Committee spent three million dollars while the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress disbursed two million dollars. These three PACs were the top money recipients and spenders among all PACs in 1977-78. The fourth highest was the AMA PAC, also no friend of liberal policy-makers. Currently, the National Conservative PAC is engaged in a multi-million-dollar campaign to oust five liberal Democratic senators: George McGovern of South Dakota, Frank Church of Idaho, Birch Bayh of Indiana, Alan Cranston of California, and John Culver of Iowa.

The potential for PACs to pour money into political campaigns has come about, ironically, as a result of the revisions in the federal election campaign finance laws made after the Watergate scandal. Though strict controls were placed on presidential campaigns, Congress was careful to exempt itself from limitations on how much money could be accepted or spent. The House of Representatives attempted to remedy this situation last October by passing the Obey-Railsback bill. The bill would impose strict limits on how much PACs can donate to candidates for House seats, but it currently is stalled in the Senate and apparently has little chance for passage this year.

The vast majority of corporate PACs have been set up during the past four years as a result of a ruling by the FEC in December 1975. On the day of the ruling, 137 corporate PACs were officially registered with the FEC. The Supreme Court added its blessing, indirectly, in certain provisions of its decision on the constitutionality of the Federal Election Campaign Finance Act in the 1976 *Buckley vs. Valeo* case.

Like labor unions, corporate PACs can draw on substantial financial resources. They are allowed to solicit management employees and shareholders for donations, and to use payroll deductions and check-off plans. During 1977-78, corporate and trade PACs gave $20 million to candidates. It is estimated that these PACs will increase their donations to $50 million this year, and to at least $100 million in 1984. At the same time, labor PACs will be able to increase their donations only slightly, since their numbers remain fairly constant. PAC donations made up 18 percent of the cost of all House races in 1974, and rose to 25 percent in 1978. It would hardly be surprising if PAC donations made up at least a third of the total cost of House and Senate races this year. And there is nothing to prevent PACs from within the same industry, such as the oil and gas companies, from each donating, say, $1000 to a candidate, thus spreading their influence around. This, in fact, is precisely what has happened.

A PAC formed by the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, called AMOCO PAC, exemplifies the growing power of corporate PACs. Created in 1976, AMOCO spent only $32,000 that year. Two years later, this figure increased 800 percent to $245,000. The director of AMOCO told the *National Journal* that he expects to spend $400,000 this year on House and Senate races. In 1978, 75 percent of AMOCO's money went to Republicans, and 78 percent of the candidates it supported, in both parties, won their elections.

AMOCO is only one of 133 oil and gas company PACs now in existence. The *National Journal* study noted that in 1974 there were only 12 such PACs. In just four years, these PACs increased their spending on campaigns by more than 1000 percent—from $183,000 in 1974 to $1.9 million in 1978. Even more startling growth was registered by the PAC of the National Automobile Dealers' Association. Its donations to candidates increased 7000 percent in four years—from $14,000 in 1974 to $975,000 in 1978. (As of 1978, only 20 percent of 3700 US corporations with assets over $100 million had set up PACs. Of the 23,800 corporations with assets between $10 and $100 million, only 3.4 percent had formed PACs. This means that approximately 26,000 corporations still can establish PACs.)

Congressmen and senators are becoming increasingly vulnerable to contributions from PACs as the cost of election campaigns escalates. Challengers to incumbents face even greater financial obstacles. In 1974 it cost an average of $106,000 for a challenger to win a House race; this went up nearly 40 percent, to $141,000 in 1976. For 1978, the average increased by 60 percent, to $229,000. This kind of spending is the only kind that gives a challenger a chance of defeating an incumbent. In 1978, 11 of the 19 challengers who won House seats outspent the incumbent (312 of 320 incumbents who outspent challengers were reelected).

Corporate and trade PACs have not hesitated to move in with help in financing these kinds of election costs. Iowan Tom Tauke, who in 1978 defeated a liberal Democrat, Michael T. Blouin, received $40,000 from 29 different corporate and trade PACs and ejected Blouin from a seat held by Democrats since 1962. Blouin received $34,000 from labor union PACs and $6000 from dairy cooperative PACs. But Tauke was able to

Coming Very Soon At Last:

Henry Fairlie on
the End of Camelot.

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outspend Blouin two to one because he also received huge sums from individual donors and right-wing ideological PACs. Among Tauke's PAC donors were eight oil industry PACs, who gave him a total of $7000.

The oil and gas industry also helped oust liberal Floyd Haskell of Colorado in 1978, replacing him with a conservative Republican, William L. Armstrong. Armstrong got $66,000 from oil and gas PACs, making him the top money recipient from the oil and gas industry that year.

A survey by *Congressional Quarterly* found that the oil and gas PACs had concentrated their money on conservative members of the Senate Energy Committee. "Of the top twenty recipients of oil and gas PAC money . . . ," *CQ* reported, "18 were Republicans and two were southern Democrats."

The *Washington Post* reported in 1979 that these PACs had given 12 of the 20 members of the Senate Finance Committee "at least $370,200 . . . since 1977."

Corporate PACs are hardly alone in their efforts to buy a Congress that is amenable to their interests; trade associations and labor unions often are no less self-interested and generous. But the corporate and trade PACs are rolling up increasingly impressive victories. The AMA PAC, for example, killed President Carter's hospital cost-containment legislation last November, which would have saved citizens an estimated $40 billion over the next five years. Common Cause reported in its December newsletter that the AMA had given an average of over $8000 in campaign contributions to each of those House members who voted for an alternative AMA proposal. Perhaps most notable was the AMA's generosity with freshman congressmen: 37 of the 48 freshman representatives who voted for the AMA proposal received an average of $9454 each from the AMA PAC.

Such largesse by any PAC is unusual, but then the AMA is one of the richest and most experienced lobbying organizations around. Others are quickly learning the trade. Is there any way of reducing or controlling the power of PACs? The Obey-Railsback bill would help. It passed the House in October 1979 along party lines. But the bill's provisions apply only to candidates for House seats. It places a $70,000 limit on the amount of money that a candidate can accept from all PACs in any one election campaign. It also reduces the $10,000 limit on PAC contributions to a single candidate to $6000. The power of corporate and trade PACs would be further reduced if they were prevented from serving as funnels for individual contributions by corporate officers to favored corporate candidates.

Unfortunately, the bill does not place similar limits on candidates for Senate races. Even so, it faces a filibuster by Senate Republicans. Interestingly, the three leaders of the threatened Senate filibuster were all beneficiaries of PAC largesse in their 1978 campaigns: Howard Baker of Tennessee ($355,000), Gordon Humphrey of Connecticut ($89,000), and Ted Stevens of Alaska ($170,000).

In the absence of any limits, however, PACs will continue to make significant donations to House and Senate races. Corporations and right-wing ideological groups will increase their influence on Capitol Hill. Whether Congress acts after the elections may depend on just who benefits this year, and how much the public at large becomes alerted to the buying up of Congress.

Jonathan Tumin

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This cloud has a Saudi lining.

The Hunt Silver Caper

Herbert and Bunker Hunt had an identity problem. They really thought they were the United States government. They stockpiled silver as no private party ever dreamed of. They designed a silver bond that was the equivalent of printing money. They made treaties with foreign powers. And when their plans didn't work out, they went to the Federal Reserve for a bailout.

People often get confused about who they are and, in itself, this is not too disturbing. The problem is that the Hunts have convinced almost everyone that they *are* the government. The real government seems hopelessly confused as to its appropriate role. Is it supposed to regulate the Hunts or let the Hunts regulate it? Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker has found that "the broad public interest" required a billion dollar bailout for the Hunts. Chrysler, Lockheed, and New York City did not have it so easy.

The Hunts, citing their own version of Nixonian executive privilege, initially failed to appear before a subcommittee of the House Government Operations Committee. Instead they sent their lawyers to say they were too busy to spend all their time testifying before different committees. But they wanted to be reasonable; they would testify before one committee (Senate Agriculture) and the others could get a copy of the transcript. The House subcommittee voted to cite the Hunts for contempt. The Hunts, shifting position quickly, said it was all a misunderstanding. They would be happy to testify. In fact, the Hunts had just been stalling a few days to finish up the billion dollar bailout package. They wanted that signed and sealed, beyond congressional meddling, and were willing to risk contempt.

The Hunts' plan to corner the world's silver was reminiscent of Jay Gould's effort to corner gold in 1870. Except that the Hunts seemed to do it better—silver ran up from $6.50 an ounce in January 1979 to $50.35 on January 18, 1980. The best Gould could manage was a run up from $125 an ounce to $165. The Hunts had

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their corner. Then came reports it all collapsed on a day now known as the Silver Scare, with supposedly huge losses and missed margin calls for the Hunts. The scare sent severe shock waves through the stock market. A month later, the first news that the Federal Reserve had put together a billion dollar bailout loan was received with disbelief. It was as if Jim Fisk had said "I couldn't quite establish my corner of Erie stock and now you've got to bail me out." Few Americans thought they were partners with the Hunts when, in January, the Hunts made three billion dollars in profits; few thought they were supposed to be partners in the Hunts' losses.

The Hunts' technique on the way up was simple and practically cost free. For a small downpayment, say $1000, they bought the right to receive 5000 ounces of silver at a particular future time and price, say in six months at seven dollars an ounce. To take almost all the cost out of it, the $1000 downpayment was not put up in cash but by a bank letter of credit. The letter of credit, which was not money but just a promise to pay money, cost the Hunts one percent or $10 a year. Assume in July the price went to eight dollars an ounce, giving the Hunts a $5000 paper profit. This paper profit could be pyramided and used as the downpayment for five new contracts. The possibilities are obviously exciting, particularly when you are gradually pushing up the price by receiving actual deliveries of silver and withdrawing it from the market. The custom in the futures market was not to require actual delivery but to take your profit in cash; only three percent of contracts result in delivery. The Hunts, however, were not typical futures speculators: they were trying to vacuum up all the world's silver.

Along the way the Hunts went into a partnership, which brought new players into the game. Across the desert sands came Prince Faisal ibn Abdullah Al Saud, Mahmoud-Fustok, Sheikh Mohammed al-Amoudi, and Naji Nahas. Insiders think the Hunts probably have 200 million ounces of silver and the Saudi Arabian connection about three times as much. The Hunts and Saudis had their corner.

They still do. Perhaps this is why the Hunts were so remarkably uninformative when they finally showed up at the committee hearings. There was so much they didn't know. Do you own or control two-thirds of the world's silver? No, nothing like that. How much less? Really couldn't say. How much silver do you own? Don't know. How much does your brother own? Don't know. Overall, did you make or lose money on silver? Herbert said, "In all seriousness I don't know the answer to that." Bunker said, "I'm really not sure what my position is." Bunker, however, added the interesting statement, "the majority of my silver was bought at seven dollars, eight dollars, nine dollars, $10, $12, in that neighborhood. So you don't have a loss until you sell something." On May 8, silver sold at $13.25 an ounce. Do you know what your brother is doing most of the time? Bunker said, "I have no control over my brother." Herbert said, "We know each other. We have offices in the same building. We do eat meals together, lunch, I am talking about."

What went wrong? What did the Hunts fail to see that caused the collapse? Or was it just that every speculative binge has an end? The Hunts' answer is simple. As they made money, others lost. These, the shorts, stood to lose even more upon delivery under existing contracts. The shorts controlled the boards of directors of the Chicago and New York exchanges. The exchanges changed the rules in the middle of the game, in essence, shutting down the silver market. When Volcker was asked whether the exchanges had engaged in market manipulation to benefit some short members, he replied, "I know nothing about that." But margin requirements were jacked up from $2000 per contract in September to $40,000 in March. Then the exchanges imposed position limits—prohibiting anyone from owning more than a small number of contracts. The Hunts were forced to sell in a dropping market. As the exchange rule changes drove down the price of silver the Hunts found themselves on the wrong side of the pyramid—each price drop meant that cash had to be put up to cover the position. On March 27 the Hunts failed to meet a $100 million margin call.

What was the necessity for the bailout? Would the economy blow up if the Hunts weren't bailed out? The question was simple but the answer elusive. Chairman Volcker, after some prodding, told Representative Benjamin Rosenthal of New York, of the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Consumer and Monetary Affairs, how serious things were:

> *Rosenthal:* Were the Hunts threatening the financial markets in this country?
> *Volcker:* Threatening in what sense?
> *Rosenthal:* Any sense.
> *Volcker:* You say the Hunts, implying that they went out to threaten the financial market. The situation was a serious concern to the financial market. There is no question.
> *Rosenthal:* How would you rate your level of concern? Very concerned, moderately concerned, seriously concerned?
> *Volcker:* I was very concerned.

But Volcker, when pressed, was vague as to exactly how his holocaust scenario would play out. Were the financial markets so sensitive? If so, why? If the Hunts defaulted on their obligations to brokerage houses and Swiss banks, would uncontrollable ripples be set off? Were any US banks threatened? Volcker said: "no banks were threatened in the sense of their stability. They may have felt uncomfortable about potential losses." A lack of comfort and financial doom are two different things. Also, no one but the Fed thought there was any real fear that the Hunts would default; maybe they couldn't come up with a billion dollars tomorrow, but pretty soon they could do that. In sum, Volcker's story was thin and fishy.

And so a great mystery arose: what was the point of the billion dollar loan to the Hunts? Bunker Hunt flatly

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denied the Hunts would default. Some banks had said they would not renew, that was true, but the Hunts still had a substantial net worth. How much? Bunker said he didn't know: "people who know how much they are worth generally aren't worth much." When asked what was the purpose of the loan, he said:

> *N.B. Hunt:* It would enable a restructuring and make it more comfortable.
> *Rosenthal:* Comfortable for who?
> *N.B. Hunt:* Well, for myself and Placid [a Hunt-owned corporation]. . . .

Surely Bunker's comfort is not the broad public interest pursued by Volcker. The mystery was enhanced by the Fed's effort to minimize its role. Volcker admitted that he had had a late-night meeting at Boca Raton with the bankers (Wriston of Citibank, Preston of Morgan Guaranty, Butcher of Chase, McGillicuddy of Manufacturers Hanover, and Clausen of the Bank of America) when they agreed to make the loan, over a snack of cheese sandwiches. But all the Fed did, he said, was to make sure the bailout wouldn't violate the administration's "voluntary" rules against bank loans for speculative purposes. He had required restrictive covenants to prevent the Hunts from using the proceeds to speculate in silver. Volcker denied repeatedly that the Fed had any greater role; the Fed had not "initiated," "approved," "guided," "organized," "sponsored," "shepherded," or "orchestrated" the loan. In fact it wasn't even a new loan; it was essentially a "restructuring of existing obligations rather than a fresh credit."

The bailout served the public interest, said Volcker. "Severe financial disturbances" were avoided. And with the restrictive covenants in place, fresh speculation by the Hunts would be prohibited. Had he seen the final language? Well, no. Would he provide it to the committee? Well, it was a private loan, the parties might object, but he "hoped" he could. Committee chairman Rosenthal was skeptical about enforcement in any event: it is "naive to me to think you can keep up with the Hunts' ingenuity." Volcker replied that the banks would enforce the provision and added, "I am not running a police force to follow the Hunts around."

The Fed's concern about silver speculation is a new religion to it. In September 1979 Commissioner Read Dunn of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission reported to the Fed that it looked as if the silver market was about to be cornered. He was advised that the Fed could care less, that silver was "just another commodity" and the Fed "expected the prices would move up and down, as is the case with other commodities." When asked about Dunn's statement Volcker said that it was "entirely misleading."

Even the basic terms of the bailout were unclear. The House subcommittee hammered Volcker with a single reasonable question. Assuming there was a financial problem, why were the banks so quick to jump in? Why not make the Hunts sell their silver first before helping them? Wouldn't that be in the public interest? After the hearing Volcker said the bailout "will enhance the prospects of the [Hunt owned] lump of silver being dispersed." But he didn't say how much, only that "we would look toward the liquidation of much of the Hunts' silver which they have acquired over the past eight years." When the Hunts testified two days later it became clear they did not look toward any liquidation. Yes, they said, they were obligated not to engage in new speculation. But of course the Hunts consistently said they had never speculated anyway. The Hunts said they had made no commitment to sell silver in the near or long term. Herbert said, "I think silver is a good investment and continues to be a good investment. . . ." In fact, as part of the bailout, the Hunts have transferred their old debts to a new partnership with a family corporation as general partner. The bailout loan will be made to the partnership but the Hunts, as limited partners, will not be liable for it. The whole procedure has lifted a billion dollar liability off their heads. The bailout lets the Hunts maintain their formidable position.

In short, odd circumstance piles upon odd circumstance. A billion dollar loan is made but its purpose is vague. Its effect is to leave the Hunts with their silver hoard. Protective provisions are included that obviously don't protect. The basic terms are unclear. The Fed shifts from total disinterest in silver to a deep interest.

What accounts for all these strange goings on? A few simple propositions supply the answer. First, while it is clear the Hunts could pay, it is also clear that to pay they would have to liquidate all or most of their silver. Second, a forced sale of the Hunt hoard would drive the price of silver so low you couldn't find it. Third, the bailout loan will prevent any forced liquidation.

The bailout loan is essentially a price support program for silver, and the obvious benefactors are the people who have the most. The world's largest holders of silver—an estimated 600 million ounces—are Prince Faisal, Sheikh Mohammed, and Mahmoud-Fustok. The Saudis, even putting oil aside, have more levers on the United States than they need to accomplish a little bailout. The withdrawal of Saudi deposits from US banks, estimated at $30 billion, surely would bring down the banking system (see "The Bankers' Dilemma," *TNR*, January 27, 1979). Also, although our government refuses to reveal the figures, the Saudis hold a good percentage of our national debt in the form of Treasury bills which must be rolled over each year. If they refused to roll over a national bankruptcy could result (see "The Book of OPEC," *TNR*, January 5, 1980). The Hunt bailout is the first public manifestation of Saudi control of the United States government and financial system.

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The settlers and the killers both have rights and both are wrong.

The Sabbath Ambush

by Leon Wieseltier

Almost at once it was whispered, even in Israel, that the Sabbath massacre was different. Hebron, it was said, was not like Munich, or Lod Airport, or the nursery at Misgav Am. The moral question in Hebron was tougher, the evil less distinct. In Hebron these Jews were not wholly innocent. That may be, but in Hebron these Arabs were wholly guilty. It was plain murder. The "provocative" presence of the settlers does not explain the crime. The victims may be blamed for much, but not for their own deaths. Their passions were ridiculous, their program was indefensible, but they had gone only to pray where they had a fine right to pray, to sing their twilight psalms at the tombs of their forefathers, where Moslems pray with the same kind of hoary filial piety, and they returned from their prayers to a hail of bullets and a fall of grenades. Five died, 16 were wounded, and later a sixth died. A simple slaughter, caused not by General Sharon's policies or Rabbi Kahane's taunts or President Sadat's good sense, but by simple lust for enemy blood.

It was unmistakably a Palestinian deed. The enthusiasts of Kiryat Arba, the Jewish outpost near Hebron, are a political problem for the Palestinians, and Palestinians do not meet political problems with political solutions. They sulk, and they shoot. And then, of course, they lose, which proves only that they were right. Arafat in Kuwait quickly sought the glory. The "commando attack" in Hebron's dark alleys, he announced, inaugurates "a new phase" in the struggle against Israel. But there is nothing new about it. Violence is the Palestinian way. It has been their primary mode of national expression (along with some poems), the way they have made their claim, since the 1920s.

But no longer, their friends maintain. The PLO is now "heavily invested" in a new line of diplomacy: it is carrying its case to Europe, to the United Nations, to world opinion. It is true that for a while the PLO had pulled its assassins from Europe, and it was not foolish enough to post them to the United States. But the assassins never were pulled from Israel, and surely never replaced there with Palestinians who wished to talk. The new policy, then, amounts to communiqués in Vienna and bombs in Jerusalem. And it is working, at least in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Austria, England. The leaders of these nations stand ready to do away with United Nations Resolution 242, to which the PLO is tired of having to answer. These free nations then will accept their payment in crude. And the State Department is delighted by the steadfastness, at last, of the Atlantic alliance; in an election year the US can't do the dirty work itself.

All this, however, is not enough for the Palestinians. They are not satisfied that the outcome of the autonomy talks is in doubt, that their boycott of Camp David may have succeeded in saving the West Bank (if not Gaza) from the treaty's provisions, that Begin's days in power are numbered, that Arafat is received in Europe's capitals as a head of state, that this summer the Europeans will recognize the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and perhaps even call for a Palestinian state. The PLO also needs to kill. In April it tried in Zurich; a bomb placed aboard an El-Al Boeing 707 was to have destroyed the plane in the skies above Lugano, but it was detected. At Misgav Am it did better. And in the ambush in Hebron better still.

The Palestinians are what they insist they are—that is, a nation—and they are not a nation of terrorists. But they are a nation represented by terrorists, and no Palestinian leaders have yet emerged who would stop throwing bombs at facts of life and instead get what they can. The Palestinians and their friends would wish the West to understand, as Edward Said says, "the larger Palestinian story from which all these things came" and "the terror in Palestinian men and women who were driven to do such things." It is deemed inhumane to lose patience with Palestinian suffering, to be hardened against the many injuries of Palestinian life. The Palestinians, it is said ironically, are the new Jews. But the Zionists also were Jews, their people suffered at least as much, the world was at least as deaf, and yet they rescued their remnant and created their hard little state. They could not have raised themselves from their wretchedness if they had been consecrated to the murder of Arab civilians. The Zionist leadership accepted the UN plan of 1947, which awarded them no more than limited sovereignty over the smaller share of Palestine; but the Palestinians, 30 years later, would not even hear of Camp David, which was—as Begin saw a little too late—the beginning of the way to a Palestinian state. There is much the Palestinians could learn from the Zionists, but the Palestinians would rather wallow in their Jewishness.

The absence of the pragmatic impulse from the political behavior of the Palestinians is partly a consequence of their advanced ideological inflammation. No Palestinian spokesman can bring himself to say about the Jews what many Jews now say about the Palestinians: that they have a national identity, legitimate rights, a genuine movement of national liberation. Article 20 of the Palestinian National Covenant denies that the Jews are anything more than a religion. Edward Said writes affectingly of the Jews: they are "the most morally complex of all opponents" and "I can understand the intertwined terror and the exaltation out of which Zionism has been nourished. . . . I understand as profoundly as I can the fear felt by most Jews that Israel's security is a genuine protection against future genocidal attempts on the Jewish people"; and then Said proceeds to denounce Zionism as colonialism. A typical Palestinian "moderate," and a bad professor: you cannot understand the Jews and yet not understand Zionism. As well argue (as many Jews do) that the Palestinians are a people, that they have borne too much and should bear no more, and so should make do with Jordan.

The problem is not the Palestinian ignorance of Jewish history, but the Palestinian belief that, strictly speaking, there is no Jewish history, or at least no national history of the Jews. And the

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world view fashioned by the Palestinian intellectual, this demonological analysis of Zionism, is the emotional justification for the Palestinian terrorist. The terrorist can coolly kill the Zionist, he can smash a child's head against a rock and riddle a young seminarist with bullets, because he does not believe that the Zionist is a human being. Palestinian consciousness is in a state of white heat. It has been morally simplified ("radicalized"), and enslaved to a single national right; and nothing any Israelis do or say, no amount of dissent from the present government's inflammatory designs, will stay the Palestinians' hand. Begin, General Sharon, Rabbi Levinger (leader of the Hebron fanatics): these are the only Zionists the Palestinians will allow. And meanwhile the Israelis are supposed to discriminate among their adversaries. They are not to concern themselves with radicals like Habash or Jiryil. Israelis are to study only Arafat, who is the "moderate," who will "settle for" the West Bank and Gaza.

The present Palestinian national movement is lamed by all kinds of bloody internal divisions, but on the matter of Israel there is extraordinary unity. There is no real debate, as there has been in the Zionist movement since its inception, about means and ends. There are no parties or factions seeking to instruct the Palestinian masses in a different style of political action. There are only zealots, and some good men saddened by the consequences of this zeal but unwilling to do anything about it. Rejectionism and "resistance" now unite the West Bank as well, which is truly ominous. According to Israeli military intelligence, the yeshivah boys were gunned down by local residents, by citizens of Hebron equipped with Karl-Gustav and Kalashnikov machine guns. The morning before the attack Arabs in the market were observed stocking up large quantities of food: they expected a curfew. A few kind souls warned Jewish passers-by to stay off the street in the evening. It appears that the Palestinian National Guidance Committee, a council formed by local leaders in the occupied territories to coordinate their opposition to Camp David, was troubled by Arafat's recent dabblings in diplomacy. The committee, which has become a major actor in the political drama, needed to be reassured that the Fatah had not abandoned its historic extremism. Arafat obliged with the Sabbath massacre.

It is said sadly about this massacre, as about the others, that it was "senseless." It was not; it was part of a Palestinian plan. The death of these settlers was calculated to bring down the strong arm of the Israeli army upon the West Bank, which would then recoil even more from the autonomy proposal. Israeli reprisals long have figured prominently in the strategy of Beirut; the Palestinian leadership welcomes such an improving influence upon the political will of its miserable people. And the Hebron massacre had a "thesis," as Arafat would say. Its thesis was that Israelis who think they have a right to live in Hebron, or anywhere else in the West Bank, deserve to die. Palestinians, on the other hand, have human rights. Mayor Kawasmeh was outraged that he was expelled for his views. "All right, I say no to Israeli settlements on the West Bank. All the world says no. Some Israelis say no. Does that mean they must be deported?" Probably not. The expulsion without due process of the mayors and the judge was ill-advised. The three new heroes already have presented themselves at the Allenby Bridge, with an army of journalists, and demanded to be repatriated. They should have been permitted to return. But whereas Kawasmeh and Mohammed Milhelm and Sheikh Tamimi can be restored to Hebron, Yaacov Zimmerman and Hannan Krautheimer cannot be restored to life.

Israelis have been slain in Hebron, but it is Israel that will be called to the bar. And, to a certain extent, quite rightly: the tragic incident is another illustration of the delusional character of Begin's policy. But the PLO will be called to no account. Obviously what it did was wrong, the apologists will intone; but for many nations and many intellectuals this is not obvious at all. What is obvious, rather, is that Zionism is colonialism. The PLO no longer shocks, and in any event, it is said, the PLO has "only one card to play." In fact the PLO has a full house: Soviet weapons, Saudi money, the deep sympathy of the third world, the deepening sympathy of Europe, the eagerness of the State Department to press for a Palestinian state (if only the hotheads in Hebron would let Harold Saunders get on with his work), the good wishes of the oil companies and the multinationals, the blessing of Allah. What the PLO lacks, of course, is Israel's trust. It must have concluded, however, that it does not need this. Israel is broke and despised, and the birth rates are not on its side. And so the revulsion of the Israeli public in the aftermath of Palestinian terror is not too high a price to pay for the rush in Palestinian pride. But these Palestinian leaders, and the leaders in the West who fail to tell the PLO that unless it renounces terror and recognizes the Jewish state it will forfeit their support, are making a big mistake. Only Israel can return the territories.

A few days after the massacre, Arafat likened the West Bank to Algeria. There is something about the event that does recall Algeria—the savagery in the casbah, the terrible fear that the malevolence no longer can be reversed, the just cause put forward by killers. But this is not the similarity Arafat had in mind. And so it must be repeated that the Jews in Israel are not *pieds noirs*, that there is no France from which they came and no France to which they can return. They are in Hebron as of right.

It is happening again, maddened Jews now cry, the Arabs are butchering the yeshivah boys again. But the Hebron massacre of 1980 is not the Hebron massacre of 1929, because the Jews now have what they wanted then. Their state need not be built, that has been done; it need rather be defended. But the Jewish ecstatics on the West Bank want to keep on building. Their contempt for Zionism and its achievements is great. They do not kindle anymore to Tel Aviv or Haifa; they are content to let Arabs become a majority in the Galilee; they care nothing for the army they demoralize or the economy they help to cripple or the laws they love to flout. The settlers in Hebron gloat that they have not come there to make Israel any safer. ("Kiryat Arba does not exist to defend Tel Aviv. . . . Tel Aviv exists to protect Kiryat Arba.") They have a higher agenda: they want what God promised, and God promised more than a Histadrut. They are pioneers, they maintain, just like in old times; but these are new times, and they are not pioneers, they are adventurers.

Zionism is in crisis when Tel Aviv is not enough. Gush Emunim, the West Bank settlers' movement, is only the most disgraceful symptom of that crisis. The Gush objects that a man cannot live only for security, that his soul cannot soar upon a passport or a post office. That is correct, but Zionism was not devised to furnish life with meaning. It set out to save Jewish bodies, and that required only a state. Judaism did not require a state; it had been portable for centuries, and it could have remained

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that way. Of course the Jewish state had its spiritual emoluments as well, but these had nothing to do with its borders, except for small souls. Israel demands security because without security there is no life, but it is the Gush that confuses Israel with life, that enshrines the state.

The sacralization of the state represents not only a decadent form of nationalism, but also a decadent form of religion. These twisted Jewish ideals, moreover, are not confined to the community in Israel; they animate the orthodox of Brooklyn and Montreal, and inspire young men who will not leave the academies of Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn for those of Bnei Brak near Tel Aviv, but will jump at the chance to study Talmud in the garrison of Kiryat Arba in Hebron. The Gush draws handsomely upon a new militance among the traditional Jews of North America, upon a fund of febrile religious sentiment that has been growing among orthodox Jews since 1967 and that the rise in 1977 of the Likud, Begin's conservative coalition, finally unleashed. Support for the socialist, secular, technocratic state of Israel had forced these Jews to bury many of their deepest Jewish aspirations; and then came Begin, whom they could recognize, who shared their symbols and wore their hat and remembered the Nazis. Begin's Israel is theirs in a way that Rabin's never was. They can now prosecute the interests of holiness—they can attempt to extend the sway on the legal system of the state, and to settle "Judea and Samaria," with the friendly help of the government.

Some of this new religious involvement with Israeli policy is just hypocrisy. The Lubavitcher rebbe, who presides over the largest and most influential Hasidic sect, has declared from Brooklyn that it is forbidden even to negotiate the future of the West Bank. He also is of the opinion that returning the Sinai to Egypt was a mistake. More recently three leading orthodox rabbis, including the chief rabbi of Montreal, produced a ruling that the return of any of the territories is an *issur hamur al pi halakha*, a strict prohibition of Jewish law, which is grave indeed. None of these distinguished shepherds was ever a Zionist; the rebbes of Lubavitch were bitterly opposed to Zionism because they preferred to await the Messiah. But now they wish the Jewish state, which they could have done without, to satisfy them. There are a few dissenting voices, and one of them belongs to Rabbi Joseph Soleveitchik, the greatest Talmudist of the age. But most of the religious remain in transports of expansionist piety. These Diaspora Jews, in short, did not escape the psychologically distorting impact of the conquest of the territories; they resist the triumphalist mentality no more successfully than many in Israel. The victims in Hebron included a student from Brooklyn and a student from Montreal. They were among the point men for the new religious jingoism, and they paid with their lives.

The settlement in Hebron imports Brooklyn's idealism, but it imports Brooklyn's ugliness as well. These Jews hate Arabs. Rebbitzin Levinger, the rabbi's wife, who commands the squatters at the old Hadassah building where the massacre took place, put it precisely: "Why should I be afraid of Arabs? In Brooklyn I wasn't afraid of the *shvartzes*." But in Brooklyn the rebbitzin most certainly was afraid of the *shvartzes*; surely she never rode the subway alone at night or strolled serenely down Flatbush Avenue. If she dares defy her new neighbors in Hebron it is not because she has courage, or because the Lord watches more closely over his original neighborhoods, but because she has the protection of an army, and she knows it. The truth is that the lady could not live without *shvartzes*. The clichés of lower-middle-class racism are irradiated in her mind by the light of Torah, but they are there all the same. This thinking is best exemplified by another American Jew on the scene, Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League, for whom the Palestinians of the West Bank are no different from the Emorites and Jebusites of ancient Canaan. He wants their land, this shabby hustler with the woven yarmulke. He demands that the Israeli government expel them to the other bank of the Jordan. A week before the massacre he went to Ramallah, another town in the West Bank, to invite the inhabitants to leave, and incited a riot. This rabbi dishonors even Jewish militarism, but the cameras love him.

Kahane, the Levingers, the Israelis who settle "Judaism's second holiest city" (a concept that is one of the Six Day War's many contributions to Jewish theology), the American Jews who settle there because not enough Israelis can be found to do so—they could not have come so far, and done so much damage in the field, on their own steam. This religious excitement is the tool of purely political interests. The leading strategist of the Gush is no believer, but he has a map, a secular scheme to dot the occupied territory with so many settlements, so many "facts," that the government finally will be unable to relinquish it. General Sharon abides by that map, as does Prime Minister Begin, though it is not the map he unrolls for President Carter. These people are intent upon a "Greater Israel." Some of them say it is for reasons of security, though their religious pawns deny it. "Security" is the magic word that justifies anything. The bankruptcy of their security argument has been exposed by Israeli generals and justices of the Supreme Court. There is no such thing as a settlement that enhances security (except maybe the security of other settlements). Security is the job of the Israeli army and its backup. In the event of war, the army will be forced to divert substantial forces to evacuate the settlers and their flags from their helpless bivouacs in the hills. When pressed, the "Greater Israel" people fall back upon ideology, which is the real origin of their program. They believe that the West Bank is the birthright of the Jewish people, its manifest destiny. They wish to improve a victory into an empire. They are sure that millions of Jews in the West are on their slow way to Israel, and that a million Palestinians can be persuaded to acquiesce in domination. The West Bank is being settled, in short, because the settlers and their sponsors want it to be annexed. But if it is annexed, Israel will not be greater. It will no longer be Israel.

There is the logic of rights and the logic of partition.

The settlers in Hebron, and their formidable sponsors in government, justify themselves by their rights. The Jews, they contend, have a historical right to be in Hebron, and they are correct. The Jews, they continue, also have a legal right to be there, and they may not be wrong. But rights are the beginning, and not the end, of analysis. The settlers err, and imperil the prospects for any peace, in their belief that rights are a warrant for action. The legitimacy of the Jewish return to Hebron has nothing whatever to do with its political wisdom. The State Department's interpretation of the legal history of the West Bank is galling, but legalists (like Eugene Rostow) who fortify the settlement policy with their corrections do not do Israel a service. Israel's failure to live with the Palestinians will cost it more than its

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failure to live with the foreign policy establishment of the United States. The settlements are sapping Israel's morale; they are alienating Israel's allies; they are playing into the hands of the PLO; they are jeopardizing the case for keeping Jerusalem. Preachments about Jewish rights are a paltry excuse for all this damage.

That a policy has a basis in right, futhermore, does not mean that it has a basis in morality. The West Bank was seized by Israel because Israel was attacked, and its tenure there, though lamentable, will have to continue until a Palestinian partner appears who can be trusted not to attack Israel again. A government charged with the safety of its citizens can do no less. But the moment the occupation becomes permanent, the moment an Israeli government announces its intention to enforce a claim to sovereignty, the Jewish state will have become something it never was, and that is a colonial power. It is immoral to rule over another people. The consequences of such a corruption cannot be escaped.

There is another problem about rights: they are not the Jews' alone. This was shown dramatically in March, when Begin's divided cabinet decided to establish a yeshivah and a "school for historical study" in the heart of Hebron, and justified this decision with a wholesome appeal to historical rights. Mayor Kawasmeh was delighted. Historical rights are exactly what the Palestinians have been talking about all along. Kawasmeh welcomed the Israeli right to Hebron because it is the same as the Palestinian right to Haifa. The mayor had a point and the point also is good for the most recent addition to the lexicon of rights, the right of self-determination. This latter "right" is quite ambiguous, and has been much abused. But the community of nations pretends to live by it, at least in regard to the Palestinians.

Most vexing about rights, however, are their concrete implications. Rights exist only for the whole thing; the argument from rights is premised upon the indivisibility of the territory. This has been Begin's premise always: that the right to Tel Aviv and Haifa is the right to Hebron and Nablus, and so it is. It has been one of the major triumphs of the Begin government to have returned the conflict to the question of rights, to have obsessed the Jewish community with first principles. The Likud's maximalist ambitions have thus come to seem perfectly natural, no less than the Jewish people's just deserts. Nor can there be any compromise on a right. The return of the Sinai was a great act of statesmanship, but it was really no compromise at all, because the Jews assert no right to the Sinai. It falls beyond even the wide net of Begin's ideology. And that ideology is not only Begin's. The integrity of the land was a principal axiom of Labor Zionism as well. Those prominent Labor figures who went over to the Greater Israel movement after 1967 defected on just this issue. There was indeed no room for such men in the Labor Zionist movement. The greatness of the Labor party lies in its having overcome the argument from rights—that is, in having accepted the partition of Palestine. Partition brilliantly broke open the costly closed circle of rights; it was an agreement not really to recognize the other's rights (that would have been too much to ask, and maybe still is) but to suspend one's own. The claim to the entire land was expelled from the Labor catechism not without anguish; Berl Katznelson and Golda Meir were among partition's ardent opponents. Ben-Gurion, who was partition's great advocate, enjoyed the idea that the rest of the land would be acquired later, but the idea never infected his policies. The partition plan forced Zionists to choose between the land and the state, and the choice they made remains proof of the essential humaneness of the Zionist vision. They chose the state because the needs of the Jews were more pressing than their rights. The grim experience of the Jews in Europe taught that they required a place where Jews always would be the majority, a democracy in which their enemies never could prevail—in short, a society where Jews had power. Partition offered power, which was its pragmatic attraction; and the power it offered was over only the Jews' fate and nobody else's, which was its moral attraction. Chaim Weizmann expressed Zionism's somber breakthrough into realism: "God has promisd Eretz Israel to the Jews. That is their Charter. But they were men of their own times, with limited horizons, heavily laden with responsibility toward the generations to come."

The occupation of the territories in the Six Day War tested Labor's determination to settle for a "mini-state" (which, after all, was what partition held out for the Jews), and Labor did not exactly stand the test. The fateful settlements policy was Labor's, even if it originated in a sincere conception of Israel's security requirements. Kiryat Arba was established in 1968 against the wishes of the Labor government, but the government did nothing to remove it, and soon aided it handsomely. It was said at the time that such moves were primarily tactical, that the settlements would improve Israel's position at the dreamed-of bargaining table, but the policy owed much to the kibbutz movement's old ideological attachments to the land.

Another difficulty about Labor's commitment to partition is that even Labor is not yet willing to divide Palestine with the Palestinians. Labor gladly will return most of the West Bank, but only to Jordanians. Labor leaders even like to think that Palestinians are Jordanians. That may be a necessary fiction—there cannot yet be negotiation with the PLO, whose stated intention is to recover all the land, and so Hussein must speak for them—but it is a fiction all the same. The Palestinians are Palestinians; the Israelis have made them that. And the king will not speak for them, even if they will not speak for themselves. Jordan certainly will not accept a share in the solution of the Palestinian problem until the Israelis make the inhabitants of the West Bank an offer that will interest them, until enough progress has been made to assure the jaded king that the problem will not blow up in his face again. That will take more than Begin's parsimonious autonomy plan. It may take more than any Israeli government can be asked to give, and it may be a long time before any credible Palestinian authority comes forward to whom something can be given. Still, it is folly to believe that the Palestinians will do Jordan's sweet bidding and be still. Hussein may fear a Palestinian state as much as the Israelis, but he is far less able to prevent it. The deal will have to be struck, sooner or later, with the people themselves. (Begin, unlike his rivals, has no more difficulty in acknowledging Palestinians than the Hapsburgs had in acknowledging

Coming:

Nicholas von Hoffman on Smoke-Filled Rooms.

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Bosnians and Herzigovinians. The largesse has a catch: nationality has been divorced from sovereignty. Of course this obtains only for others, not for Jews and Hapsburgs.

"They say all of Palestine is the land of Israel," Mayor Kawasmeh observed after the Sabbath ambush, "and every Palestinian who hears Prime Minister Begin say that says the opposite—that it's all Palestinian land." The logic of rights is what Begin and Arafat, Gush Emunim and the Palestine National Guidance Committee, have in common. The logic of partition is Labor's and—whose? Who are the Palestinian leaders who will suspend their own rights, and talk borders and security and peace?

The murders in Hebron must awaken the Jews to the consequences of their convictions. It is time for an honest reckoning, time to call all these moist Jewish moods by their true names. Jews who are for keeping the West Bank must know that they are also for more death. And Jews who are not for more death must know that they are also for not keeping the West Bank. There is no middle way.

The Gush always has been quite candid: it is willing to pay the price; the politics of transcendence cannot be without martyrs; God will be their reward and the soil will be his servants'. Many Jews admire the settlers for this: they have purpose, they put their lives on the line, they are pure (as their wistful admirers presumably are not). It is hard not to espy in this admiration, especially among certain American Jewish intellectuals, a conventional bourgeois fascination with simplicity, irrationality, violence. Many of these admirers are in fact remote from the Gush's easy dreams, from the religious fervor, from the fantasies of empire. But they suffer this weakness for fanatics, and if it does not lead them to outright support for the annexationist policy, it certainly stops them from opposing it. These Jews must be made to see that they are being used, that their silence is a kind of endorsement. They are genuinely devoted to Israel, they sincerely fear for it, but they go along with settlements that drain its resources and doom it to war and embarrass its reason for being. Kiryat Arba, as its members proudly admit, was founded to make accommodation with the Palestinians impossible. Its purpose, then, is misguided; it puts other people's lives on the line. And, as the incredible story of James Eli Mahon Jr. proves, it is not pure.

Mahon was an American who did two ferocious tours of duty in Vietnam, where he went to kill Communists; then he infiltrated antiwar groups for the FBI in Washington, where he killed a member of a motorcycle gang; then he flew to Israel during the Yom Kippur War to kill Arabs. Mahon converted to Judaism—because "the Jew must be disciplined just like the soldier"—and became "Eli Hazeev," Eli the wolf. Eventually he hooked up with Rabbi Kahane and moved to Hebron. He liked Hebron because there he could carry his M-16. It was as good as Nam. Mahon was carrying his M-16 when he was cut down in the Sabbath ambush. He never got off a shot. Rabbi Kahane mourned him as "a magnificent sharpshooter. It's a terrible loss for the people of Israel." Rabbi Goren, the Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, assured the bereft parents that their son was "holy," but the parents refused the consolation. Mahon was disturbed: he was taking his own private war all over the world; the man was an American monster. But he found what he wanted in Hebron. Kiryat Arba was Mahon's kind of adventure. The settlers' feeling about Arabs was Mahon's kind of hate. "The only good Arab is a dead Arab," the wolf would tell his friends. American society produced him, but there was a place among the Jews for a man who could not stop killing. Travis Bickle became a hero in Begin's Israel.

There could be no Kiryat Arba without "Eli Hazeev," Rabbi Kahane, the "retaliation squads" that prowl the West Bank for Palestinian windows and windshields, because that is what Kiryat Arba is. All that the residents there concluded from the massacre was that they needed more troops. They called the defense minister a "murderer" and demanded better protection. The National Religious party asked for a review of the army's standing orders not to use weapons in the occupied territories. The Cabinet announced that it would do what was required for the resumption of "order and normal living." But order will require an Israeli soldier on every rooftop, and in those morally and logistically insupportable conditions life will not be normal, which will be all according to plan. The Jewish vigilantes who are out to spoil any solution make it easier to understand Ben-Gurion's decision in July 1948 to fire on the Altalena, a ship carrying weapons to Begin's private army. These people who answer only to a higher authority can ruin everything.

But as the Jews were firing on the Altalena, the Arabs were firing on the Jews. That is still the case. In Israel the Peace Now movement is struggling against the settlers, but in the Palestinian world nobody is struggling against the terrorists. "Dovish" Jews quarrel with "hawkish" Jews, but there are no "dovish" Palestinians, except when it is time to talk to reporters. It is not enough for Jews to persuade other Jews that the Palestinians are not just a military problem, that they are truly a political problem, when the Palestinians continue to behave like a military problem. Arafat linked the ambush in Hebron to the demise of the Security Council resolution for a Palestinian state; the yeshivah boys died because of an American veto. The PLO continues without compunction to order the slaughter of Israelis, and the experts discern "moderate trends"; Israel is torn by dissent from the policy of permanent occupation, and the experts rule that reaction finally has triumphed.

The experts are reasonable people who believe that there are only reasonable people—that people kill only if they must, nobody can want to be a terrorist, terrorism is only proof that all other ways were blocked. But no terrorist ever had to kill. The terrorist chooses to kill, not because he is a reasonable man at his rope's end, but because he is an unreasonable man who belongs at the end of a rope. The Palestinians did not have to ambush the students in Hebron. There are other ways to determine their own future, but the Palestinians have not yet mastered them, or even tried. Terror has not been their last resort, it has been their first. The Israelis are told that it is up to them, that one concession, and then another, can end the conflict, but it sometimes is hard to believe that anything the Israelis do will matter very much. Their enemies, and their enemies' friends, want a solution, but they have only one solution in mind, and nobody is measuring it against Israel's security needs.

The settlements, it is always said, are the problem. But the settlements are only part of the problem, and they are hollow things—makeshift encampments with a few babies and a few rifles, enough only to insult the Palestinians. The settlements, in any event, may soon be stopped—sooner, surely, than the terrorism. And when the settlements are no more, the world will see how little will have changed.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

A Couple of Decades

From 1952 to 1956 I was the editor-in-chief of a small new publishing house, and in 1953, I think it was, I saw the manuscript of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. "Saw" is the precise word: it was read by an associate who recommended rejection, and I didn't press the matter. I remember the dog-eared, coffee-spotted look of the battered typescript. I had assumed that our house wouldn't get first, or even fourth, look at really promising novels, but when I was told that this author had already published a well-received novel and that his publisher had declined this one, when I could see that it had done considerable bouncing around Manhattan, I decided, harried as I was for time, to accept my associate's recommendation. I read not one word.

All of us have many scenes in our lives that we would like to rewrite. This is one of mine. We roll back to where my associate finishes speaking, then instead of what I did reply, I say, "Well, I don't know. Something about this thing. . . . I don't know. . . ." I insist on reading it myself, and I realize I've made a discovery—a very timely one, too.

Shucks.

One by-product of a smarter response would have been the chance to speak more firmly now on *Heart Beat*, a film about Kerouac and friends, particularly about the way it deals with *On the Road*. According to the picture, which was written and directed by John Byrum, the manuscript was typed on a roll of paper-toweling—*so* much more bohemian, don't you agree?—and there's no mention of the fact that Kerouac had already published a novel. And the scenes in the office of the publisher who eventually takes the book are right in line with the way Hollywood always treats publishers' offices: the film world recasts publishing in its own image.

The screenplay is based, debased, on the brief memoir by Carolyn Cassady of the same title, which describes the days in California when she was married to Neal Cassady and was loving both Neal and Jack. Allen Ginsberg, under another name, is also in the picture, eruptively. (The whole story, from beginning to end, was dramatized by Martin Duberman with some tact and empathy in a play called *Kerouac*, produced Off Off Broadway a few years ago.) As biography, the picture is bosh. As filmmaking, it's boshier. You can tell a real writer because he writes, if he has to, sitting on the floor of a dirty toilet while someone throws up in the bowl. You show that people are free spirits by giving them conventional neighbors who are shocked at their behavior. And, as the fellow said, etcetera. But two things in *Heart Beat* strike home.

First, the Beat feeling of the 1950s. Even though Byrum starts before the credits with the stunningly original touch of an atomic-bomb explosion, something valid about the era seeps through the malarky of the film, something about the disconnected feeling of young people then, not at all political, dharma-oriented as it became again after the 1960s, tied to drugs and the Road. The Beat time was when pot and pills became part of the diet of discontent (before they reached the contented suburbanites); and it was the time when the basic American myth of the Road became, not a testament to an endless continent, but a symbol of flight *within* the well-settled continent.

Second, Neal Cassady. Kerouac is played by John Heard with lashings of quiet sensitivity, which is about all he's asked for. Carolyn is played by Sissy Spacek, setting herself back to Square One after her advance in *Coal Miner's Daughter*. (For one thing, who ever thought Spacek would convince as a woman who enthralls two rambunctious men?) But Cassady is played by Nick Nolte at a level that lines him up for the Hall of Non-Fame.

That hall is filled with people who gave good performances in forgotten pictures. A few instances: Barbara Loden in *Wanda*, Peter O'Toole in *Brotherly Love*, Richard Burton in *Staircase*, Paul Scofield in *Bartleby*, John Cassavetes in *Mikey and Nicky*, Rip Torn in *Payday*, Anne Heywood in *The Fox*, Jack Lemmon in *Cowboy*, Alberto Sordi in *Why?* The list is very extensible. Nolte was overpraised—any praise was overpraise—for his beefcaking in *The Deep* and *Who'll Stop the Rain?*, but in *North Dallas Forty* he caught the aging athlete painfully well, and in *Heart Break* he is perfect. No one, figuratively, will see it.

Cassady, the model for Dean Moriarty, "the father we never found" in *On the Road*, was that recurring curiosity, the uncrowned king, the man of no demonstrable great achievements who always suggests great abilities, who attracts the passionate loyalty of people more evidently gifted than himself, who seems to have been born at the wrong time and place or on the wrong planet and who, situated rightly, would be imperial. (I'm trying to avoid the word "charisma.") I knew a man like that who

Films Worth Seeing

Best Boy. Love and reticence shine in this quiet documentary about a 52-year-old retarded man and his aging parents, especially in his unforgettable mother.

Incorrigible. Philippe de Broca apparently can't help being lighthearted or making Jean-Paul Belmondo feel the same way.

Kramer vs. Kramer. If you've seen it, don't see it again: the script evanesces. But the first time around, the acting is fine enough to sustain it.

Norma Rae. Released again because of Sally Field's Oscar. Besides her heartening performance, this is the best 1935 picture we are likely to get this decade, a real rouser.

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was the head of a moving-van crew. J. B. Priestley wrote about such a man in *Bright Day*. Ralph Waite played such a man in *On the Nickel* (reviewed last week). Nolte fills the bill completely. In cold fact he's just a knockabout who drinks, smokes joints, wenches, fools around, supports his family (when he gets one) as a railroad brakeman; but we believe unreservedly that he is a power source and a magnet for those who know him. Despite his "exile," they recognize his royalty: and so do we. It's hard to recommend that you go to this bobbly film just to see Nolte; but if you should find yourself at it, there would be Nolte.

After the 1950s, the civil rights and Vietnam decade. Then, in the 1970s, the 1960s over again, whooped-up and sadder. *Where the Buffalo Roam* supposedly deals with the adventures of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, the supposedly fascinating journalist of the 1970s; and the film's half-hearted con is that it captures the madness of an era—madness brought on because, underneath, the heart is breaking at injustice and hopelessness. What the picture really is, however, is *Animal House After College*—the world as a fraternity house for alleged grown-ups.

Bill Murray plays Thompson with that taciturn TV-comedy understating comic technique that makes you wish you could turn the face up louder as well as the sound. Thompson here defends pot-smokers, hates Nixon, deplores pomposity, is fundamentally swell—in short, a hero just as flawless as any *Collier's* hero 30 years ago except the flaws are now measured by new standards. Peter Boyle plays his radicalized lawyer with a flamboyance that is supposed to counter Murray's quiet. Even if it does, it doesn't matter.

The credibility of this agonizingly madcap picture is not up for question. What's the point of questioning it in a film where Murray and Boyle, on Nixon's campaign plane in 1972, spray everyone with fire extinguishers including the candidate, then simply walk away? It's the pitch of the *in*credibility—the level of comedy-fantasy that was aimed at—that's low, in every possible sense. *Where the Buffalo Roam* is the kind of liberated film that gives old-time taboos a certain wistful appeal.

Michael Ullman on jazz

Leroy Jenkins

A jazz violinist whose skills have been called "beyond category" by Nat Hentoff, Leroy Jenkins is a small, intense, worried-looking man, now 48 years old. He has performed impressively with some of the greatest avant-garde musicians associated with Chicago and elsewhere, recording with Anthony Braxton, Archie Shepp, Alice Coltrane, and Roland Kirk. He was a guiding member of one of the most powerful groups of the 1970s, the Revolutionary Ensemble, a trio consisting of Jenkins, Sirone (Norris Jones) on bass, and Jerome Cooper on percussion. Despite the acclaim that this group has received in the seven years of its existence, and despite the four records he has made as a leader since that time, Jenkins remains relatively unknown today. Once embarrassed by his lack of worldly success, he used to lie about his age, he told me, but now he sees his problem as "symbolic of a black man's progression in the art world. It takes him twice as long. My age means nothing except that it's taken so long for people even to hear of me." Today Jenkins lives in a small Greenwich Village apartment with his wife and their baby daughter.

Born in Chicago in 1932, Jenkins picked up the violin when he was eight years old.

> I was brought up on the South Side of Chicago, on 44th between South Park and St. Lawrence. I was raised with a lot of women around. My auntie, grandmother, mother, sisters. My mother and father were divorced. I was the only man, or, let's say, male, around the house. But my auntie was a teenager, and she had a friend, a very impressive young man who played the violin. Very well. I'd never heard anybody up close play that well. So I wanted to do it. My mother bought me a small factory-made violin, half-sized, from Montgomery Ward. I started studying with a man named O.W. Frederick, who was a church musician. . . .
>
> Mr. Frederick's knowledge of the violin repertoire wasn't extensive, so most of the things we did were sort of show pieces—pieces that were beautiful or flashy—that moved people. When I got to high school—Du Sable High—they didn't have a string program. I studied there with Captain Dyett—the man who taught all the guys in Chicago. He switched me to clarinet, because I was knowledgeable about music, and after I had played that for about a year, he skipped me from the beginners' band to the concert band and put me on bassoon. I continued to play with the church band at the time too. We used to go to Baptist Conventions all over the country and I played the clarinet in marches.

After high school, Jenkins obtained what was called an "entertainment scholarship" to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The school paid his tuition and in return Jenkins played for school functions on bassoon, clarinet, and violin. College was his first experience away from home, and he wasn't ready for it. He entered the school in 1950 and graduated in 1961, having returned to Chicago several times in the interim because of academic difficulties. But if he wasn't initially ready for college, his Chicago environment proved even more destructive. There he became involved in narcotics, until finally he returned to Florida in 1956, feeling that Chicago was, for the time at least, his "nemesis." Jenkins felt that the problems were not merely his own, but those of his community. Although he says that his opinions are not necessarily definitive—he hasn't lived in a black community since 1969—Jenkins feels that there was a decline in some aspects of his culture.

> In my early days in Chicago, the black community was very strong, nothing like it is now. There was nothing destructive in there. In those days, we didn't have a black identity like we did in the later years, but we had more cohesiveness, I think. Nothing like that now. When I go back to the black community today, they're trying to copy Travolta. His dance. You know, before then, people were checking out *our* dancing.

Jenkins returned to Florida A&M in 1956 serious about becoming a musician. He majored in the violin, practicing eight hours a day, learning Bach and Paganini, and starting to improvise as well. Jenkins gave two classical concerts in a black neighborhood in the South.

> The first concert I played for a black audience there, and they loved it. I think I played Vivaldi, Handel, and some Bruch. They liked seeing this black boy playing

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classical music. But then a group—the Beaux Arts League—presented me a second time and nobody showed up. They had already heard me once. That was it. Those black people were not at that time interested in classical music. They wanted to hear this black boy play one time, and then they could talk about that for years. I was interested in making music my life and I saw then that I wouldn't be able to make it.

Now, I had a heavy background in jazz anyway. I played rhythm and blues saxophone, listened to Charlie Parker and jazz of the old days like Billy Eckstine, Lionel Hampton, Cab Calloway, Ellington. . . . Well, at that time I dropped the idea of playing classics even though I could have done it, if I wanted to suffer enough. But I'd rather suffer this way [playing jazz], because I figure I can get something done: playing what I'm doing now, I know I can contribute in a way that I couldn't contribute in classical music. All I'd ever do is play other people's stuff. And I wouldn't be able to influence any black folks, that's for sure.

After graduation, Jenkins taught instrumental music for four years around Mobile. By the time he returned to Chicago in 1965 or 1966, he was a bebop violinist, more or less in the mold of the early Jean-Luc Ponty. Back home Jenkins met members of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, an organization that would have a revolutionary effect on black music. A cooperative, the AACM was fostering new freedom in improvised and composed music. The organization met weekly and gave concerts regularly. Its arrangements, sometimes mere riffs, were designed to accommodate all the instrumentalists present, even the violinists. After hearing an AACM-sponsored concert by Roscoe Mitchell that "wiped us out," Jenkins joined up. He was relieved to be accepted immediately. "They were excited by the possibilities of the violin. They all wanted me. They saw something in the violin." Jenkins found the loose, improvisational music of the AACM people more humane and more amenable to the violin. "[The Chicagoans] were playing more of a conversational thing. . . . There was more inflection, more dynamics in their music. . . . I started to bring out the full violinistic potential in the music. Now I'm playing double stops, chords, dischords, harmony, disharmony, everything." From 1965 to 1966 Jenkins stayed with the AACM writing for all types of bands, including a 22-piece orchestra.

photo of Leroy Jenkins by Michael Ullman

With Anthony Braxton and Leo Smith, Jenkins left for Paris in July of 1969. Along with drummer Steve McCall they formed a quartet calling themselves the Creative Construction Company. Jenkins returned to New York City in January of 1970, living for a while in Ornette Coleman's basement and playing with the bands of Archie Shepp, Cal Massey, and percussionist Mtume. Although Ornette Coleman recommended him to Alice Coltrane, Jenkins was most interested in starting his own group: the cooperative Revolutionary Ensemble was the result. The Ensemble was a consistently critical but never commercial success, despite five records for as many companies. (The group made $1000 for one record, but it took them a year to get it; they garnered less than that from their own label's offering. A&M gave them a $10,000 advance for their Horizon album, but subsequently fired the man who had offered this bonanza.) Nevertheless, it was with the Ensemble that Jenkins made his greatest impact, as both an improviser and a composer. He writes skillfully—typically he exploits the capabilities of the violin with long, fluid melodies, which are often repeated only to be followed by scurrying, contrasting subjects. "Simple Like," performed on an Anthony Braxton recording, might be the title of many of Jenkins's pieces. His best improvisations create an aura of singing simplicity. The Ensemble featured the pizzicato and arco bass of Sirone, and the resourceful percussion work of Jerome Cooper, who could also double on piano or bugle. Their music was often lyrical, but could also be dramatic and impassioned. The group broke up in 1978 when the members became discouraged about the business.

Since then Jenkins has performed as a soloist in New York, Boston, and elsewhere, and he has worked with several new groups that include such musicians as Anthony Davis and drummer Andrew Cyrille. He played in the 1979 Newport in New York Festival. He is composing, but notes the problem facing jazz composers who are unsure who will play their pieces:

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> I won't, I can't be associated with any one particular instrumentation. That is because the turnover in musicians is very quick. You can't keep musicians for a long time like you used to. I think all the players nowadays are trying to get their own thing. I think they are more educated and they have ideas of becoming leaders and composers. We used to compose this way [for undetermined instruments] in the early days of the AACM, but now we have to do it. Too many people want to be leaders. I can't say it's wrong. All I say is, it's different.

It is not surprising that Jenkins is somewhat discouraged by this aspect of his business, for his greatest successes have been with disciplined musicians who have had the time to learn each others' music. This familiarity is crucial to groups that depend on long stretches of free improvisation, but continuity is difficult to provide in the unstable economic environment surrounding serious music.

Jenkins prefers cooperation to stardom—I once ran into him and Sirone on a street in Soho in the dead of night, tacking up posters advertising a Revolutionary Ensemble concert. But as he has proved, unhappily, cooperation is difficult to maintain. Nevertheless when he records Jenkins is able to enlist some of New York's most adventurous musicians. Despite its odd vocalisms and occasional brisk freneticism, his music has a mysterious charm. As a violinist he offers a big tone and supple technique. Jenkins has found a way to play *all* the instrument while maintaining what he calls a human, vocal sound. It is perhaps an indication of his seriousness that he looks forward to a time when he will own an instrument that will allow him to perform without amplification. In an electronic age, that would be revolutionary.

Only one Revolutionary Ensemble record is still available: it is Inner City 3016. Jenkins's solo work is captured on *Solo Concert* (India Navigation 1028). Some people may be able to find the two records by the cooperative group featuring Jenkins and Anthony Braxton: *Creative Construction Company*, Muse 5071, 5097. More typical of Jenkins's recent work are two key recordings by small groups—*The Legend of Ai Glatson* (Black Saint 0022) and *Space Minds, New Worlds, Survival of America* (Tomato 8001).

The Pulse of Politics: Electing Presidents in the Media Age by James David Barber

(W. W. Norton; $14.95)

Whatever else happens in the election of 1980, we apparently can look forward to the greatest popular disenchantment with electoral politics and presidential candidates in modern times. The evidence for this is already plain to see. To take one case among many, the *San Francisco Chronicle* took a telephone poll of Northern Californians in early April: only 23 percent of the respondents in the poll were satisfied with *any* of the presidential candidates, while 77 percent were satisfied with none of them. More scientific polls are showing the same general tendency—not surprisingly, after all, in a year in which probabilities strongly favor a major-party race between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

This disquiet with the workings of the electoral market is even more acute among professional students of American politics than it is among people in the street. Surely this is the case with James David Barber, one of the most eminent of these professionals. In the past, Barber has made important contributions to our understanding of presidents and of what makes them tick as personalities. With *The Pulse of Politics*, he now attempts to provide a framework for understanding the course of presidential elections in this century, the "Media Age." Barber's purpose in doing so is to explain how the United States got into the unholy political mess in which it now finds itself, and to stress the replacement of party by journalistic-media intermediaries as a key factor in producing this mess. *The Pulse of Politics* is at once a vivid, often entertaining portrait of the "great game of politics" as played in the media age and a sustained critique of this game. Barber yields to few others—including this reviewer—in his disenchantment with presidential choices, and in his deep sense of foreboding about the political future of this country under such "leadership" as the media-dominated, image-saturated electoral market has been providing us lately.

This book has certain strengths, but also conspicuous weaknesses that cannot be overlooked. To begin with, its style is impressionistic and narrative—a fact that will bother some academic professionals, though it does not bother this reviewer. There is an important place for narration, color, and impressionism in serious work on American politics, particularly where moral purpose informs such work. But this does not mean that anything goes: it remains necessary to evaluate the adequacy of metaphorical constructions and the relative precision of their terms. One need not be a devotee of radical positivism in social science to insist that, even in popular accounts, the author must justify the "boxes" he builds to classify his materials in terms that go beyond his personal taste.

The basic framework within which Barber analyzes 20th-century presidential elections is a repetitive oscillatory movement from "conflict" through "conscience" to "conciliation" and back to "conflict" again. This movement is the "pulse." It is apparently fueled by some undefined deep-structural processes arising from within journalism itself which lead journalists to package candidates and issues, and in general to impart a dramatic structure to politics. Barber's oscillatory scheme joins many others that have been proposed by students of American political history, from the early efforts of Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. to recent work on critical realignments. Typologies of elections have been proposed, without a cyclical scheme, by the authors of the classic of survey research, *The American Voter*. Common to all such efforts, however much they may otherwise diverge in argument or theory, is an attempt to provide relatively clear-cut criteria justifying why a given election should be put in one typological "box" rather than another.

When we turn to Barber's "pulse," such difficulties present themselves immediately. In the first place, the categories are defined so loosely that we are left with no compelling reason for believing the scheme as a whole. Second,

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when Barber attempts to put actual elections in his pigeonholes, severe anomalies result. We may begin at the beginning, with 1900 as a "conflict" election. Barber devotes a chapter to "Theodore Roosevelt 1900," despite the obvious facts that McKinley was the Republican presidential nominee that year, and that no one could have predicted his assassination in 1901. Indeed, TR's many enemies in New York state politics were delighted with his elevation to the vice presidency. As Boss Tom Platt put it, "I am going to the convention to see Theodore take the veil."

Extending Barber's scheme back one election would give us 1896 as a "conciliation" election—a classification that lacks all credibility. Perhaps there was a "sigh of relief" that year as he contends, but that sigh came after the crisis had been reached and passed, not before or during it. In reply, it might be said that the new media age only dawned with the full triumph of Hearstian "yellow journalism" in 1898, and thus nothing before 1898 could fit into any scheme based on events afterward. But processes simply don't work that instantaneously across the flow of political history. So far as 1900 is concerned, all of TR's dash as a vice-presidential candidate notwithstanding, it appears to be a classic example of a "maintaining" election, marked by the sharp decline in temperature of social conflicts that typically follows a realignment crisis.

Other elections make little or no sense within Barber's scheme, particularly when viewed together. Let us take one paired example among many. We are told that 1924 was a "conflict" election, while 1968 was a "conciliation" election. There are interesting similarities between the two. In both 1924 and 1968, conflict was rife everywhere except within the Republican camp. Both elections were marked by massive third-party movements, bitter conflict among Democrats, and consensus among Republicans. Why, then, the different classifications of the two? Because, it seems, Nixon chose the rational strategy of being above the battle fought by the Democratic party's warring fragments. But did not Coolidge follow precisely the same strategy in 1924? One looks not only here but elsewhere for stable criteria of classification, but one looks in vain. Finally, if "conciliation" can be stretched to describe a Carter-Reagan race in 1980, it can be stretched to cover anything. Barber's metaphors do not fit with what we know about electoral history from other sources. Moreover, the pigeonholing involved gives only the most limited sense of longer-term historical or developmental processes. For example, are there important differences among the effects of print media before the 1920s, print and radio in the 1930s and 1940s, and these plus television since? One assumes that there probably are, but Barber gives us few clues as to what they might be.

These are serious criticisms, since they involve the whole structure of *The Pulse of Politics*. It says a good deal for the power of its message that this book is nevertheless well worth reading and pondering. It vividly conveys how important the manipulation of images has become in our advertising-saturated, mass electoral market. It likewise points directly to the activist role of the press (and electronic media) in manipulating and shaping outcomes. Barber's discussion of the role of Henry Luce in creating Wendell Willkie out of whole cloth is splendid. Some of the stories he tells are familiar to students of American political history but deserve to be better known to a larger public. Moreover, the continuous stress on the

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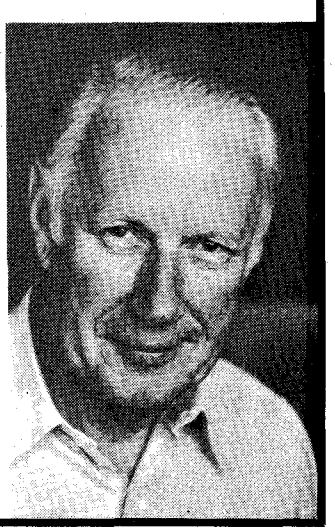

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creation and manipulation of images places many of these stories in a new light. Finally, it is a great merit of this book to point out that the deep corruption of the electoral market involved with the replacement of party by media goes back a long way. This is not a problem that began with television. It has been central to our presidential politics throughout most of this century. My suspicion is that the media-induced "pulse" has been much more irregular, much more dominated by immediate-run considerations of entrepreneurial opportunism, than Barber suggests. But his basic point remains unassailable.

A mass electoral market ultimately forms in, and cannot be understood apart from, its larger sociological context. Advertising in the modern sense did not exist prior to 1900, because American capitalism had not yet evolved to the point where underconsumption of mass-produced goods was a significant problem. Nineteenth-century electoral politics flourished prior to the development of bulk merchandising of goods and the creation of wants, and hence prior to the emergence of a truly national economic market. For many reasons, therefore, politics was channeled through partisan organizations. The shift toward high mass consumption was closely associated in time with the emergence of a "new," nonpartisan journalism (Pulitzer and Hearst), and with the development of such nonpolitical mass diversions as organized sports. It was further associated with the Progressive-era revolution against party cadres and bosses.

1916 was the first election year in which the new advertising techniques pioneered by Ivy Lee and others were applied to a presidential campaign. Woodrow Wilson needed such techniques in his bid for reelection ("He kept us out of war") since, among other things, cadres of the Democratic party had hopelessly disintegrated in the North since 1896, the last time the Democrats had held office. Furthermore, Wilson had a special incentive to use the new techniques because he was the candidate of the minority party of the time. But the post-1916 displacement of party by media technique has not been as much of a one-way affair as Barber implies. There seems good reason to suppose, for example, that the relative weight of party organization made a real comeback during and for some time after the New Deal realignment. It is really with the super-developed consumer society of the 1950s and after—and the rise of the American empire internationally—that this shift has been consummated.

The dominance of the media over our politics has now led to the creation of a monstrosity that presents a grave danger to what it left of democracy in the United States. We are now in the midst of a deep, intractable crisis of consciousness, and hence of institutional structure. This, if anything, is the meaning of the 1980 presidential campaign.

ON HEARING YOUR LOVER IS GOING TO THE BATHS TONIGHT

Does it matter? Do you mind?
Here, now, is an opportunity for Mind
over Matter, the one triumph: whatever
in life we really accept
undergoes a change, the world is not the same—
a quality is added,
everything has its shadow.
As for *minding*, now's your chance: what easier
occasion for opening
letters (not those from you) like so many wounds,
finding literal motives for being left
in the lurch . . . what *is* a lurch?
Before you start spying for real, consider
what is wrong here, or who wronged.
Name one man (you included)
whose venery, given vent, has failed to be
venereal in bringing
home the old surrealist bacon: tireless
pursuit of the Same New Thing! What do you have
to complain about? Having
things your own way is not really having them:
jealously is out, as Proust
has taken some pains to prove.
It has nothing to do with love, jealousy,
it is only passed around
at the same time, like pepper with the melon,
for people who happen not to know better:
anyone who knows melon
would never touch it. Your fantasy of his
body doing what it does
with yours, only doing so
with others . . . is *that* the difficulty? Then
put yourself at ease: two mouths
have never drunk twice from the same chimera.
What he does with you is you; with others, them:
"he" remains a mystery—
you personify only what you are not,
and you are not there. Be glad;
that is a world diminished to an often-
catalogued repository of objects,
possessing no absolute
and final face, no recognitions. There is
(Keats has the words) no wonder
but the human face. What is
that face except our body trying to be
more naked than the body?
Where better than in the dripping faceless dark
for him to discover, and discard, himself,
returning then, rinsed free . . .
All the terminations belong to others,
time alone is yours. Alone.

Richard Howard

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In a time of trouble it is very easy to view the past through rose-colored glasses. As instruments of democratic representation and political channeling, the traditional political parties probably never worked as well as nostalgia would lead us to believe. Nevertheless, parties, even American parties, are collective organizations with long memories and relatively stable commitments—characteristics that media-molded candidate organizations notoriously lack. There is excellent historical reason for believing that parties significantly counteracted the fragmentation of power that our constitutional arrangements prescribe. There is equal reason to suppose that, even in the simpler past, this constitutional scheme could not work effectively without the counterweight of the parties (as, for example, during the War of 1812 or in the Confederate states during the Civil War). For without parties, fragmentation goes unchecked, accountability disappears, and everyone enjoying a bit of power is mightily tempted to go into business for himself and his clients.

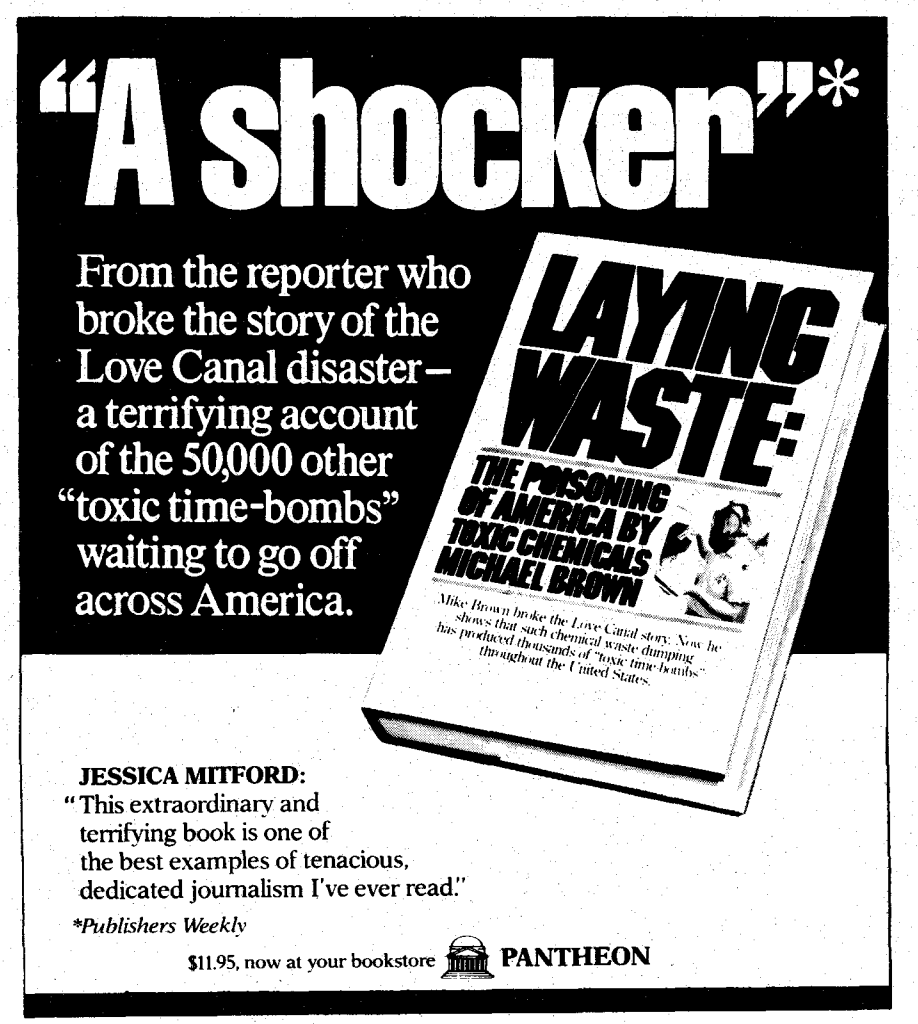
But now the functions of parties have been taken over largely by media organizations. These ad hoc groupings apply precisely the same kinds of mass-merchandising techniques to the electoral market that are used to sell soap, deodorant, and pain-killers in the economic market. From a structural point of view, this leads directly to a deflation if not to a collapse of power as constitutional fragmentation does its work. From a democratic point of view, it leads to an irresponsible politics and a debased currency of political ideas. It thus forms a very significant element in the crisis that now grips the United States.

Escape from this crisis is not readily visible at the moment, but awareness of its existence is central to *The Pulse of Politics*. As Barber observes in his concluding remarks, "Leader-mass politics is inherently unstable; given our Constitutional arrangements it is governmentally unworkable. There are grave risks in proceeding as at present." Just so. And he is also right in stressing not only that reconstruction of party is essential to resolving the present mess (a view he shares with many other commentators) but that the development of some collective purpose is a first condition for such a rebuilding.

Barber's whole book leads to the core proposition quoted above that, given our constitutional arrangements, leader-mass politics is governmentally unworkable. If Barber is serious about this, he must also conclude that these constitutional arrangements must be sweepingly—and soon—changed. But something else is required first. Ultimately, the purpose of Barber's effort is to strip away the myths surrounding presidents and presidential elections, to make his readers feel how catastrophically inadequate the present political situation really is. This disenchantment with coercive mythic tradition is the first, necessary step to the radical transformation of political consciousness. And this, in turn, is the *sine qua non* of the creative institutional reconstruction that is now demanded of us as the price of survival.

As Barber reminds us, along the way intellectuals—including social scientists—have an important role to play. Their job is to tell it "like it is" in words a broader public can understand, and to prepare the ground for the change in consciousness. As we have said, there are flaws in Barber's attempt to do this. Classification schemes apart, it is rather too easy to get lost in fascination with the details of the stories he tells, and hence to lose sight of the underlying point of his tales. But it would be a great pity if these flaws were to cause professional colleagues and general readers to dismiss the message that Barber is trying to convey. For his book makes a surprisingly pointed contribution as an ethical political act—the kind of act Barber criticizes his colleagues for not making.

This criticism, unfortunately, is well founded; it is high time that we social scientists started earning our pay. Perhaps those who are paid to think can begin doing this by making concrete proposals for dealing with the massive domination of the electoral market by the media and its creatures. But much, much more is required if this crisis is to be overcome without destroying democracy in the process. It seems to be a basic proposition of social analysis that no matter how bad things are, people will not abandon what they have unless they are shown an alternative vision. A review is scarcely the place to suggest even the outlines of such a vision. Perhaps we can limit ourselves here to saying that it would contain a clearly stated recognition that late capitalism and political democracy are not identical; that there are bound to be important tensions between the two; that dealing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explicitly with these tensions forms a large part of what any democratic politics is about; and that, if political choice must be made between the two, democratic values come first. This kind of vision is compatible with important core values in the American political tradition. It begins with a disentangling of the familiar from the necessary, and hence with a critical demolition of certain cherished symbols of government. *The Pulse of Politics*, in its own way and with its own limitations, attempts to do just that.

Walter Dean Burnham

Walter Dean Burnham is professor of political science at MIT.

Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida edited by John Sturrock

(Oxford University Press; $15.95)

In 1967 Jean-Marie Auzias published *Clefs pour le Structuralisme*, in which he argued that the best way to understand Structuralism is to read Claude Lévi-Strauss. "Le Structuralisme, c'est Lévi-Strauss." The advice is still apt, because Lévi-Strauss has committed himself to structuralist principles and procedures more explicitly than anyone else. If there is (or ever was) an orthodoxy of Structuralism, he is its priest. But he did not invent his principles: they are mainly the translation into anthropology of the linguistic principles most clearly outlined in Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1966). If we start with those and see how Lévi-Strauss converted them to his own use, we can regard Structuralism as the procedures common to the two men. We can then understand other procedures, deriving from Structuralism in various ways, as Structuralism's divergent sects.

Saussure distinguished between language, which is to be studied by linguists, and the faculty of language, which is to be studied by psychologists. He then distinguished three words that could be confused easily: *langage*, *langue*, and *parole*. *Langage* is language as such, the totality of human speech. *Langue* is a specific system of communication, the social part of *langage*. *Parole* is the particular individual's way of speaking, the executive aspect, how a particular person employs his faculty of speech within a certain social convention that enables him to be understood.

Saussure's *Course* has further principles. One: we must study language in itself before taking account of its bearing upon other systems. To study language in itself is to study its structure. Two: the elements of a language are to be defined by their mutual relations, and in terms of sameness and difference. Three: when considering a linguistic sign, we must distinguish between the signifier (the word as spoken) and the signified (the notion or concept it conveys). The connection between signifier and signified is arbitrary: for instance, the idea of "sister" is not linked by any inner relationship to the particular succession of sounds we make when we speak that word. Four: we should distinguish between synchrony and diachrony. Synchrony reports a state of affairs; for instance, that the trees in a certain orchard are in the pattern of a quincunx. Diachrony studies the temporal process by which a certain state of affairs has come to be. Synchrony, again, studies language as a working system, its structure as a network of effective relations. Diachrony studies how a language has developed into its present form.

These are Saussure's main principles. You are a devout structuralist if you act upon them. As Roland Barthes said: "watch who uses *signifier* and *signified*, *synchronic* and *diachronic*, and you will know whether the structuralist vision is constituted." Lévi-Strauss acted upon Saussure's principles, notably in his study of myth, where he argued that the meaning of a myth does not reside in the isolated elements that enter its composition but only in the way those elements are combined: its meaning is the ensemble of relations among its constituents. Lévi-Strauss's studies of myth, kinship, totemism, food, and other themes are attempts to discover in them structures of relations, the pattern or paradigm he identifies as the meaning in each case.

I am describing the orthodoxy of Structuralism, or rather the particular body of research in which such an orthodoxy may be found. But Saussure's linguistic theory has affected work in other fields, although it often has been applied in heretical ways. Saussurian values are clearly present in Louis Althusser's work in Marxist economics and politics; Jacques Lacan's work in psychoanalysis, even though that work is officially a reading of Freud; in A. J. Greimas's work in semantics; Barthes's structuralist writings on fictions and mythologies; and Michel Foucault's efforts to describe the spirit of the age in unspiritual terms.

Structuralism has proved useful, not only in the fiery Paris of 1968 and thereafter, but wherever people want to reflect upon society in terms of relations, systems of exchange, modes of power. Particularly if you want to attack bourgeois society, you can translate relations of constituents into conspiracies of parties, developing a conspiracy theory to explain the whole structure or institution of society. You can go further and argue that the individual is a mere function of an impersonal system of codes, the agitated wake left by the ship of society. No part of this rhetoric is required by Saussure's linguistics or Lévi-Strauss's anthropology, but a theory can be forced to serve many different causes. On the whole, the ideology of Structuralism is determinist and therefore a great deal of structuralist writing is bent upon showing how we are managed by structures of convention and imagery we do not understand. If we could understand them, we would be less at their mercy. When you read Foucault, for instance, you find him trying to prove that you are caught in a monstrous web of edicts, axioms, and prescriptions; it is an open question whether you should decide that it's too late to change the situation or bestir yourself to escape from it.

Two things have happened since 1967. The first is that nearly every structuralist has become a lapsed structuralist; or his work has become so diverse that no lucid account of Structuralism can accommodate it. And the second is that some structuralist axioms have entered the work of writers who insist that they have never been structuralists. An orthodox structuralist was always a rare bird; today he is nearly extinct. But this does not mean that Structuralism might as well never have happened.

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Into this context comes *Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida*, a book of five essays edited by John Sturrock. It is a witty title, and occasionally a witty book. The main assumption of the essayists is that the best thing about Structuralism is that it has led to "Since."

Dan Sperber's essay on Lévi-Strauss maintains that he is an important anthropologist but that his Structuralism is "an odd mixture of sound principles and unsound expectations." By now, he says, Structuralism has become for Lévi-Strauss "a hindrance to the full development of his own anthropological insights." And the essay ends on a severe note: "That he should attribute his own individual creativeness to an abstract 'structuralism' is modesty on his part. To follow him in this would be to show either submissiveness or ingratitude." Sturrock's essay on Barthes is very fine. Again he discovers that Barthes was not really a structuralist, or rather that his most interesting work was done independently of Structuralism. He recites Barthes's distinction between two kinds of writer, the *écrivant* and the *écrivain*. The *écrivant* is your ordinary journeyman who writes to convey a single meaning, which he hopes you will receive intact in its lucidity. He is not interested in language as such, or in ambiguity, linguistic play, or semantic chance, except that he takes precaution against their entering his sentences. The *écrivain* is a pleasure-seeking type, he writes for fun or joy, he is a shameless narcissist, happily naked and nakedly happy in the mirrored room called language. Sturrock is helpful on all this, but he doesn't go far enough to say, as I think he should, that Barthes got bored with criticism, structuralist or not, in the end, and took to the pleasure of becoming an *écrivain*. At that point, of course, Structuralism as an official activity was stylishly transcended. In occasional bursts of principle, Barthes still retained the "philosophy of disintegration" that Sturrock ascribes to him, "whereby the presumed unity of any individual is dissolved into a plurality and we each of us turn out to be many instead of one." Yes, yes, I know, and do in part believe it, but like many another theory it did not prevent Barthes from recuperating himself by recourse to the pleasure principle.

Hayden White's essay on Foucault gets rid of Structuralism at once, quoting Foucault in a mocking mood, making fun of structuralists who play "the pleasant games of genesis and system, synchrony and development, relation and cause, structure and history." Foucault is not alone in biting the hand that has fed him, but his teeth are remarkably sharp. It is clear, and clearer now after White's essay, that Foucault's theme has always been the discourse of power, power as discourse, and that in every question he has studied—madness, sexuality, imprisonment, and so on—he finds a conflict between those officials who claim the "right" to discourse and those who are denied this right. White is obviously sympathetic to these studies, but he also argues that Foucault's entire work lacks a theory of language that would sustain it; so his thought "remains captive to that very power which it has been his aim to dissipate."

Malcolm Bowie's essay on Lacan traces usefully the lines of force between Lacan and his precursors; Freud, mainly, but also Saussure and Roman Jakobson. He is very illuminating on Lacan's terminology of "subject" (*sujet*) and "ego" (*moi*), the Symbolic and the Imaginary, and the post-Freudian concept of the Other. Sensitive to all the arguments that have been brought against Lacan, Bowie assesses them with notable precision and justice, but he ends by emphasizing how far-reaching Lacan's basic ideas are, especially when they are concerned with the relation among the unconscious, desire, and the Other.

The last essay in the book is Jonathan Culler's on Jacques Derrida, the most vigorous exemplar of "Since." Derrida's relation to Structuralism is almost entirely critical; he has always insisted that Saussure's linguistics is "theological" through and through, and grossly sentimental in its appeal to the voice audible in words. Indeed, Saussure is one of Derrida's main targets: he is accused of the same "metaphysics of presence" that Derrida has attacked in virtually everyone he has read from Plato to Heidegger. As for Lévi-Strauss, much the same holds. Derrida maintains that the concern for structure reveals a fundamental yearning for order, stability of meaning and reference. Such a desire, according to Derrida, is childish; instead, we should find whatever pleasure we can in the free play of language.

Culler's account of these matters is splendid, and especially interesting where it traces the relations among Derrida and Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, and Lacan. These are extremely tendentious relations, and Culler

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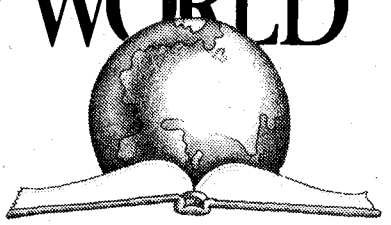

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hasn't nearly enough space to treat them fully, but his summary in each case is judicious. I wish he would say, what seems increasingly clear, that Derrida's recent work has reached a point at which his philosophy of play has become Epicureanism. Indeed, it is time someone looked into the question of desire and pleasure as motives in modern French criticism. The pleasures celebrated in Barthe's *The Pleasure of the Text* and *A Lover's Discourse* are not those of Derrida's *Glas* and *Epirons*, but they are compatible with the fact that when all else fails, apparently, there is still pleasure. A style of pleasure is what we come to when we have given up the search for a style of truth. Desire, play, and pleasure are the terms of "Since."

Sturrock's book, then, is excellent, a fine introduction to some of the most important figures in contemporary thought. I wish he had made it plain that not all the valuable forms of contemporary thought are French, and that even in France there are many critics and philosophers who may turn out to be just as important as Sturrock's five. The effect of having each essayist write about one man is that the work of each becomes canonical. Explication takes so long that there is no time left for comparison and evaluation. This is the only complaint I would lodge against a very lively book. Not a complaint, really; more a gesture toward the limitation of such a book. For one thing, the book does not explain why we, presumably the general literate public, should be especially interested in these five men, an anthropologist, a philosopher, a psychoanalyst, a historian of ideas, and a literary and cultural critic. Important, yes, I have accepted the adjective, but important to whom? Isn't it odd, for instance, that all of these thinkers are important to literary critics, but not—or not necessarily, or not in all cases—important in their several disciplines? For instance, Lacan is revered by some literary critics, but not (I gather) by his colleagues in psychoanalysis. If you were a practicing anthropologist, you would indeed admire Lévi-Strauss, but you probably would work in quite a different way, and you would regard him as something else, a poet perhaps. One of the many odd things about the contemporary situation in literary criticism is that the most influential people are not literary critics, they are prose-poets strayed from several other disciplines. And isn't it odd that the essay about the psychoanalyst is written by a professor of French; and the essay on the philosopher is written by a member of the English department at Cornell? True, the essay about the anthropologist is written by an anthropologist, and the essay on Foucault is written by a professor of the history of consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz, and the one on Barthes is written by Sturrock, who indisputably knows about French literature and criticism. Still, it's a curious fact that the five thinkers are prophets or poets footloose from their disciplines rather than crucial figures in the history of their disciplines.

Sturrock's book doesn't comment on this question, nor does it answer the other questions: what makes a thinker, these days? How do you get to be a thinker? Is it wise to start by being a master of your profession (no, I gather) or rather a genius of some sort, a maverick, a man who lives on the margin of his profession and turns marginality into a virtue of some poetic kind? The more you think about Sturrock's five, the odder your thinking becomes.

Denis Donoghue

Denis Donoghue holds the Henry James Chair of Letters at New York University. His new book, *Ferocious Alphabets*, a study of contemporary disputes on the act of reading, will be published later this year by Little, Brown.

Havelock Ellis: A Biography by Phyllis Grosskurth

(Knopf; $16.95)

How important is sex? Phyllis Grosskurth's superb biography of Havelock Ellis raises this question anew. Throughout the 20th century, intellectuals have been engaged in rescuing sex from neglect and disapproval. In this context one thinks above all of Sigmund Freud, but also of Wilhelm Reich, Herbert Marcuse, Alfred Kinsey, and of Ellis himself. These were the men who broke the 19th century's silence on sex and placed it at the center of human experience. Because of them we now cast a jaundiced eye, for example, on people who say they are bored by pornography, if only because they are so obviously pleased with their boredom. Sex, we've come to believe, has been underestimated, and in some cases dramatically so.

That judgment, while probably correct, is in one respect uncritical: it lacks a comparative framework. Any adequate answer to the question, "How important is sex?" ought properly to establish its place in relation to the remaining elements of human experience.

By the importance of sex, I mean less its significance in our own lives than its role in our judgment of others, whether acquaintances or figures out of the past. How much does one need to know about the erotic life of a person before one can reasonably take his measure? To what degree of familiarity must one attain before counting someone a friend? Is it sufficient, for instance, to know whether a person is homosexual or heterosexual (to know, in other words, his sexual identity), or must one also know the specifics of his sexual practices and fantasies?

This last question almost answers itself, for I doubt that anyone has not sometime been deeply attached to a person whose sexual life, save in its broadest contours, remained mysterious. Other considerations, therefore, must weigh more heavily in choosing our friends—and, by implication, in judging our fellowman.

The first of these is probably character. The qualities subsumed under that term—generosity and meanness, wit and humorlessness, loyalty and treacherousness, cheer and gloom—may well have sexual roots. But as we encounter them in individuals, they assume independent existence and function as autonomous criteria of judgment.

Only slightly less important are intellect and culture. To put the matter crudely, whether or not a person is smart will ultimately figure more prominently in our estimate of him than whether or not (or how often) he masturbates. I am inclined to think that a person's place in the economy is also among the things that are more impor-

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tant than sex. What one does for a living, that is, probably makes a greater difference than what one does for kicks.

Let me immediately add that sex is more important than a number of things to which substantial weight is given in both public and private judgment. It is, I think, more important than looks, wealth, age, tastes in food and clothing, and probably even nationality. A good case can be made for its being more important than health as well. Sex, in short, belongs somewhere in the middle. It's not the most important thing, but neither is it as trivial as the bored critics of pornography would have it.

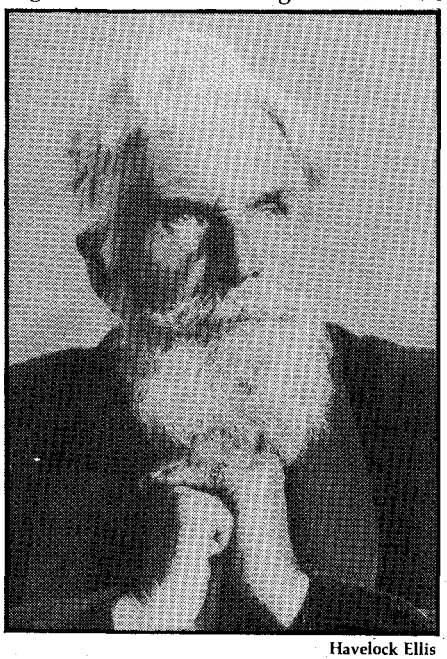
Havelock Ellis makes a good test case for this proposition, because he represents the extreme instance. His historical importance rests almost entirely on his role as sexual liberator, the first of the great anti-Victorians, and if ever sex should count for something, it ought to be in the life of this man whose principal intellectual effort was devoted to its study.

Professor Grosskurth seems to have made just such an assumption, for her book tells us more about Ellis's sexual life than any previous biography. She is able to do this because she is an indefatigable researcher, having made her way through all of Ellis's publications (books by the dozen, articles by the hundred) as well as over 20,000 letters. Furthermore, she is so manifestly scrupulous and intelligent that one has complete trust in her findings.

The sexual facts about Ellis are as follows. First, he was a urolagnist. That is, he achieved orgasm most readily in the presence of a urinating woman. He confessed to this anomaly in his autobiography, and Professor Grosskurth detects it in nearly all of his passionate attachments, particularly in the decades following his wife's death in 1916. It appears to have originated in a series of childhood experiences, notably on a trip to the zoo with his mother, at some point during which "she stopped and he heard a stream of water falling to the ground." Like any worthwhile sexual peculiarity, it had its comic aspects, as when Ellis persuaded his mistress to pee while walking in the rain or amid a crowd at Oxford Circus.

Second, Ellis was impotent. Vaginal penetration was not in his repertory. In what fashion not specified by Grosskurth or in any of Ellis's letters, apparently), his urolagnia was combined with mutual masturbation. Freud, incidentally, guessed Ellis's condition, though the two men never met. He reasoned that a man so reluctant to pass judgment (and Ellis always wanted to have everything both ways) must be suspected of impotence!

Finally, there is a hint that Ellis may have been genitally underdeveloped. The possibility of a very small penis and undescended or atrophied testicles is, I take it, the implication of the following footnote: "A distinguished psychiatrist has suggested to me that perhaps Ellis did not develop adequately at puberty. He was particularly interested in the significance of Ellis's high voice." The same conclusion is also implied in the repeated statement of his mistress, Françoise Delisle, that his "problem" was "insufficient development."



Havelock Ellis

The facts of Ellis's sexuality have at least one implication for our estimate of him: they suggest that his commitment to sexual liberation may not have been entirely disinterested. In particular, they imply that his apology for sexual deviation was inspired in part by a desire to apologize for his own deviancy. The work most immediately affected by this consideration is *Sexual Inversion*, published in 1897 and for its time a remarkably enlightened and humane defense of homosexuality. The biographical specifics would seem to urge that for homosexuality we substitute urolagnia.

Grosskurth sees the possibility of such a substitution, but she is too sensible to insist on it. And indeed a moment's reflection exposes the crudeness of this line of reasoning. It is an example of the error into which one can fall by attributing too much significance to sex and not enough to other matters—in this instance, to character.

The truly extraordinary thing about *Sexual Inversion* is that it was written by a heterosexual. Though many still assume that Ellis was a closet gay, Grosskurth shows that not a scrap of evidence supports this assumption, which appears to have rested largely on the indisputable fact that his wife was homosexual. To be sure, Ellis was aided and abetted by a number of homosexuals, including Magnus Hirschfeld, Edward Carpenter, and above all John Addington Symonds, the subject of an earlier book by Professor Grosskurth. But in assessing *Sexual Inversion*, and in particular the insinuation that the book was self-serving, one ought, I think, to pose the following question: would any of Ellis's homosexual friends have bothered to write a defense of urolagnia? That is, would any of them have been able to see beyond his own predicament in order to contemplate in other men's lives analogues to his own difficulty? Such an ability to transcend self is an obvious measure of moral intelligence, and Ellis possessed it to a greater extent than his famous homosexual contemporaries. He was distinguished from them therefore less by his sexual idiosyncrasy than by his generosity of spirit.

Sexual Inversion unquestionably shows Ellis to best advantage, and it is probably his greatest achievement. A more general estimate of the man must take note of some serious liabilities. Grosskurth has faced up to this task bravely, while avoiding the meanspiritedness that disfigures the account of Ellis's last biographer, Arthur Calder-Marshall. Significantly, Ellis's failings reflect not his peculiar sexual constitution but flaws of mind and personality. That is, they confirm my general proposition about the limited usefulness of sexual considerations in forming personal and intellectual judgments.

As Grosskurth makes clear, the decline of Ellis's reputation over the past half-century can be traced to the quite unsurprising fact that he wasn't overwhelmingly intelligent. His mind was neither rigorous nor imaginative, and he was continually drawn to dubious thinkers, such as the confused mystic and womanizer James Hinton, whom Grosskurth calls "the major influence in his life." This simple intellectual shortcoming is dramatized in any comparison with Freud, who was almost his exact contemporary and who in the early years of the century was not nearly so famous. Where Ellis treads

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gingerly among authorities, wanders from topic to topic, and invariably takes the most judicious (and, if possible, upbeat) position on all questions, Freud is bold, systematic, and fearlessly pessimistic. It does Ellis little good that he may have been right more often than Freud. His formulations are so bland that one has difficulty even remembering them. Freud offers the Oedipus Complex, the unconscious, and the audacious thesis that dreams are wish fulfillments. Ellis counters with reassuring commonplaces about the innocence of childhood eroticism and the primacy of the rational mind, as well as a theory of "dream-synthesis," which argues, in effect, that dreams reflect the conscious emotions of waking life. True perhaps, but hardly the stuff of which intellectual revolutions are made. This fundamental dullness, I would argue, counts for immeasurably more than either his urolagnia or his impotence when it comes to taking stock of Ellis's life work, and such is precisely the impression Phyllis Grosskurth conveys in her biography.

Similarly, Ellis's was not a character to which one can genuinely warm. He must be credited with tolerance and loyalty. But he was also solemn, timid, and exasperatingly patient. Not infrequently I yearned for him to punch one of his acquaintances right between the eyes—the primary candidate being his whiny, self-important, and truly foolish wife, although the egregious Hugh de Selincourt (at once a fulsome admirer and the seducer of his mistress) runs a close second. Above all, Ellis impresses one as treacly. That quality is conveyed especially in his letters, which Grosskurth quotes at some length and which are an unending source of embarrassment. Here he is, for example, on the subject of love:

> It is a mystery (& a miracle as well), & not what those poor people think who say it is just a matter of the flesh, with a little sentiment thrown in, or those others who say it is a matter of the soul with the flesh as a mere accident. For it is body-soul in one—soul becoming body and body becoming soul, & that is why it is ecstasy—of Joy & also sometimes of Pain, but that also good, for without the possibility of it there cannot be joy.

And on the same theme to his wife: "Love is funny and I am funny. It needs its wifie's little breasties every two hours like a baby and if they seem far off—it do shriek!" In considerably more disciplined form, the vapidity and effusiveness evidenced in these passages infect virtually everything Ellis wrote, and, as with his mental dullness, these qualities of sensibility count for a good deal more in explaining his thought than does his urolagnia or his impotence.

Phyllis Grosskurth proves her metal as a biographer by mustering seemingly inexhaustible sympathy for this not very likable man, although, as I've indicated, she is far from uncritical. It is an ungrateful compliment to say that she has written a better biography than her protagonist deserves, but as I read through her book that thought forced itself on me repeatedly. And without explicitly addressing the question herself, she also provides striking evidence for the proposition that sex is not, as they say, all it's cracked up to be.

Paul Robinson

Laying Waste: The Poisoning of America by Toxic Chemicals
by Michael Brown

(Pantheon; $11.95)

Before I lost my way in life and became a newspaper columnist, I worked as an insurance adjuster, handling what were called PDs—property damage claims. One PD concerned a very old man with a very old car he loved dearly and which he used only on weekends to transport his many grandchildren to a certain zoo in the borough of the Bronx. One day a car owned by someone we insured (but stolen and being driven by a thief), demolished the old man's car as it sat, unoccupied, at the curb. It was my job to explain things to the old man: we would not pay for his damages, the thief could not, and no one else would. In New York at this time this was known as tough noogies.

Tough noogies is more or less what some of America's largest chemical companies have said when it comes time to own up for the mess they have made of large hunks of this country. Foremost of these companies is Hooker Chemical and foremost of these messes is a travesty of justice called Love Canal, New York, where earth, trees, houses, people, and dreams have been poisoned by the gunk Hooker buried in the ground.

It is probably too much to say that wherever Hooker has gone, it has fouled, but it is not too much to say that it has made quite a mess out of the Love Canal section of Niagara Falls, New York. There, beginning in the 1940s, the company used the old canal named for a local entrepreneur, William T. Love, to bury something like 20,000 tons of waste residues—chemical garbage.

The stuff was brought to the Canal in 55-gallon drums, dumped in, and then covered. In 1959, Hooker sold the dump site to the Niagara Falls Board of Education for a token one dollar. The city built a school there and over time people built houses. Soon there was a neighborhood called Love Canal. It had homes, a school, and poison in the ground that would, with time, seep to the surface.

And seep it did. It came out of its drums and crept through the ground. It followed abandoned pipes in the ground and it percolated up, and eventually the school that had been built on the land that Hooker had sold for a buck had to close. The kids were getting sick.

In fact, lots of people were getting sick. They were getting cancer and having miscarriages, and the children being born had a higher than normal rate of birth defects. Some residents were just plain feeling nauseous, complaining, really, of every ailment known to man. Some of their complaints could be substantiated, but some could not. It seems that there is a high degree of hypochondria in the Love Canal area. You can't blame people for thinking they are sick when under their feet is the kind of stuff that could kill a tree on the spot or make a dog roll over dead after no more than a curious lick.

Hooker took some remedial steps, but it never accepted responsibility for what happened and apparently it was less than candid about what it had put into the ground. It claimed—and claimed ar

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claimed—that it did what it was supposed to do back in the 1940s and the 1950s when the stuff was sunk into the ground—state of the art and all that. If, after all these years, its chemical garbage had taken a walk, that was unfortunate, but unforeseen.

In the end, the state of New York moved in, bought the 239 houses closest to the canal, and closed them up. The people who live next to those homes—the second ring—also claim that the poison has ruined their lives, that they, too, are sick. It is these claims that the state has been unable to verify, although it has offered to move out pregnant women and families with children under the age of two. At one time, the state was paying $7000 a day for motel room and meals. (New York State has since filed a $635 million damage suit against Hooker, calling Love Canal "a national symbol of corporate irresponsibility.")

One thing that the state can verify right off, though, is that the value of the homes in the Love Canal area is exactly zip. The house of Lois Gibbs, president of the homeowners association, had been on the market for more than a year and a half when I talked with her, and there had been no takers—and there will be none. The fool who would buy a house in Love Canal has not yet been born.

There are, though, plenty of victims—plenty in Love Canal and plenty elsewhere. For something like 40 years, the nation's chemical companies have been dumping and burying wherever they damn well chose—almost throwing the stuff over their shoulders as they moved on to fatter and fatter profits. They have been subcontracting to thieves and incompetents, conducting their business as if it really was only their business. Love Canal is only one example. There are plenty of others, many of them chronicled in this book by Michael Brown.

Ah, you say, at last the book. Yes, the book. It is dismal. It is poorly written and horribly edited and presented in such a fashion that if Love Canal—the centerpiece of the book—had not been amply reported elsewhere, I would hesitate to vote some of Brown's facts. Brown, a former reporter for the *Niagara Gazette*, slurs his facts that when he intimates that his former publisher tried to sit on his stories as a favor to Hooker, you have to wonder if that was really the reason.

The word "seems" appears over and over again: "There seemed to be many cases of cancer among the women. . . . It seemed that some officials were trying to conceal their findings. . . . Laurie seemed to be losing some of her hair." Deaths that Brown hears of get mentioned in just that fashion: "I was told that one elderly woman, seriously depressed upon hearing the state's plans, had died of heart failure." Testimony is mentioned, but not where it was given. People suddenly appear and then drop from sight and jargon percolates through the text like the chemical waste through the soil of Love Canal. "The dioxin potency of this isomer was nearly beyond imagination."

This lack of precision in both reporting and writing is unfortunate because it detracts from the really good work Brown did in Niagara Falls when he wrote more than 100 stories about Love Canal and kept after Hooker with the tenacity of a process-server. The one thing he never lost sight of was that a giant chemical company had poisoned the earth and could say no more than it was sorry—blameless, but truly sorry.

As a result, the story Brown tells is often a compelling one. He goes from New York to Iowa to Tennessee to New Jersey and California and Louisiana and Michigan and Maryland, and always the story is the same: some company put some poison in the ground or in the water or in the air and walked away from it. The stories, like the chemicals themselves, can make you sick: a rancher who loses his land and his cattle to chemical poison; an old lady who can't drink from her well; a crusading newspaper editor who throws in the towel to a chemical company; mothers with sick kids; and all of us—all of us—breathing, drinking, and eating the sort of stuff our high school chemistry teachers used to lock away.

If anything, the message here is not that the earth is poisoned, but that poisoning the earth pays. It is cheaper to do it, pay your fine, and move on than to dig a proper hole. In Florida, Hooker paid a $38,000 fine for polluting the air with flouride—petty cash for a giant chemical company which is itself a subsidiary of the even bigger Occidental Petroleum.

Hooker is by no means the entire chemical industry. It appears to be the dead-end kid of the lot and certainly not representative. Still, it is big and fat and has done a lot of damage, and you would think that someone would have come along by now, grabbed it by the ear, and called it to terms. No way. Like J. P. Stevens, it goes its merry way, just trying, it would say, to make a buck, complaining, probably, of stifling overregulation, and prepared to fight the new toxic waste regulations announced recently after only three and one-half years of study. With Congress garroting the FTC and everyone from Ronald Reagan on down demanding that industry, like Chiang Kai-shek, be unleashed, the future for Hooker is bright indeed—much brighter than for, say, those poor folks back at Love Canal. But then, as we used to say in the insurance biz, sorry, but tough noogies.

Richard Cohen

Richard Cohen is a columnist for the *Washington Post*.

Robert Oppenheimer: Letters and Recollections edited by Alice Kimball Smith and Charles Weiner

(Harvard University Press; $20)

Here is Robert Oppenheimer revealed through 167 personal letters, through the recollections of his friends as recorded by the editors, and through his own recollections recorded in 1963 by Thomas Kuhn. The text is half letters and half recollections. The editors have done a superb job in putting this material together and making it into a coherent narrative. Each of them is a distinguished historian. Alice Smith came to Los Alamos in 1943, lived through Oppenheimer's reign there, and afterward wrote *A Peril and a Hope*, a history of the postwar struggle of scientists to deal with the political consequences of nuclear weapons. Charles Weiner has been active for many years in recording interviews with scientists as raw material for historians

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of science who work on a more technical level. Together, Smith and Weiner have the knowledge and background to understand all aspects of Oppenheimer's correspondence. They also have the tact to fill out unobtrusively the many gaps in the documentary record.

The most important editorial decision made by Smith and Weiner was where to stop. They decided to stop in 1945. As they say in their preface,

> In sharp contrast to the surviving letters that Oppenheimer wrote before the war, most of the later correspondence is voluminous, formal, and guarded. . . . Not only formal but cautious. . . . Therefore, we have chosen to present the less familiar Oppenheimer, learning, playing, making friends, doing physics, winning recognition, as yet unburdened by the actuality of the bomb, by fame, and by public responsibilities.

Their decision allowed them to end their story with a wonderfully evocative letter, one of the few not written by Oppenheimer himself. The last letter was written in November 1945 by Edith Warner, who ran a little restaurant at the crossing of the Rio Grande where Oppenheimer used to relax with his friends.

> Your hours here mean much to me and I appreciate, perhaps more than most outsiders, what you have given of yourself in these Los Alamos years. Most of all I am grateful for your bringing Mr. Baker [Niels Bohr]. I think of you both, hopefully, as the song of the river comes from the canyon and the need of the world reaches even this quiet spot.

The letters in this volume divide into four periods, showing distinct phases of Oppenheimer's development. In the first period, Oppenheimer is a Harvard undergraduate and his letters are mostly to his high school English teacher Herbert Smith. To those of us who knew Oppenheimer as a public figure already wrapped in enigma and legend, these early letters will come as a shock. It resembles the shock we experienced in 1953 when Ventris and Chadwick deciphered the Linear B script of the Mycenean tablets. We had been brought up on legends of the Mycenean heroes preserved by oral tradition and distilled in the poetry of Homer. Here we suddenly had presented to us written documents, factual records of the Mycenean age, hundreds of years older than Homer. And the documents turned out to be bureaucratic records, devoid of heroism and of poetry. So it is with Oppenheimer's Harvard letters. "Tiresome" is the best word I can find to describe them. I say this as a warning to the reader. Do not be discouraged if you find the early letters irritating. The quality soon improves. The first flash of real brilliance comes with a letter to Miss Limpet (alias Paul Horgan) from Celia's son Henley (also himself). The letter ends with a parody by Henley of Eliot's recently published *The Waste Land*.

The Waste Land is an easy poem to parody but I have never seen it done better. In the second period, when Oppenheimer was starting his career as

Robert Oppenheimer. Courtesy Dr. Frank Oppenheimer.

a physicist, he wrote a poem of his own with the title "Crossing." It describes with exquisite economy of language the landscape of New Mexico, which he had come to love. Perhaps it was no coincidence that 15 years later he persuaded Edith Warner to set up her restaurant at the crossing of the Rio Grande.

The third period is the time of maturity when Oppenheimer was teaching physics and building a first-rate school of research in California. To this period belong the finest letters, many of them addressed to his brother Frank. One of these, written in 1932, contains a paragraph on the subject of discipline, revealing something of the force that drove Oppenheimer to be the man he became.

> But because I believe that the reward of discipline is greater than its immediate objective, I would not have you think that discipline without objective is possible: in its nature discipline involves the subjection of the soul to some perhaps minor end; and that end must be real, if the discipline is not to be factitious. Therefore I think that all things which evoke discipline: study, and our duties to men and to the commonwealth, war, and personal hardship, and even the need for subsistence, ought to be greeted by us with profound gratitude; for only through them can we attain to the least detachment; and only so can we know peace.

The fourth period is the time of sudden metamorphosis when Oppenheimer leapt into command of nuclear-weapons research, founded and directed the Los Alamos laboratory, and pushed to completion the production of bombs in time for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many of the letters from this period are still astonishingly warm and human. But they are more superficial than the earlier letters, and discuss the how of the bomb project rather than the why. Only one letter, to the physicist Isidor Isaac Rabi in 1943, deals explicitly with the why. At the end, immediately before Edith Warner's concluding letter, comes the text of the farewell talk given by Oppenheimer to the Association of Los Alamos Scientists. The talk is in Oppenheimer's postwar manner, impersonal and guarded. By November 1945 his metamorphosis from private to public person was complete.

A mine of information for historians interested in Oppenheimer and his times, this volume also offers much new insight into Oppenheimer's character. More clearly than before we can see the nature of the flaw that made his life ultimately tragic. His flaw was restlessness, an inborn inability to be idle. Intervals of idleness are probably essential to creative work on the highest level. Shakespeare, we are told, was habitually idle between plays Oppenheimer was hardly ever idle. His restlessness appears already in the early Harvard letters, outpourings of words written by a young man unable to stop when he has nothing more to say Restlessness was at the root of that craving for discipline which is revealed in his letters to his brother. Restlessness drove him to his supreme achievement the fulfillment of the mission of Los Alamos, without pause for rest or reflection. Without his restlessness, the pace at Los Alamos certainly would have been slower. Then there would have been at least a chance that World War I might have ended quietly in a Japanese surrender with Hiroshima and Nagasaki spared.

Oppenheimer was well aware of his own weakness. In later life he never

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spoke of himself directly, but he occasionally expressed his inner thoughts obliquely by quoting poetry, especially from George Herbert, his favorite poet. In my Oppenheimer file is a recent letter from an old friend (Mrs. Ursula Niebuhr) describing a lunch party at Oppenheimer's house in Princeton.

> Robert went to his book-case, and drew out a rather nice old edition of Herbert and read in that sympathetic voice of his 'The Pulley';
>
> 'When God at first made man,
> Having a glasse of blessings standing by . . . '
>
> and ending as no doubt you recall with the lines:
>
> Yet let him keep the rest,
> But keep them with repining restlessnesse
> Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,
> If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse
> May tosse him to My breast.'

Freeman J. Dyson

Freeman J. Dyson, professor of physics at the Institute for Advanced Study, is author of *Disturbing the Universe* (Harper & Row).

Brief Review

Sherman's March by Burke Davis

(Random House; $12.95)

In his 1864 march from Atlanta to the sea and thence up through the Carolinas, General Sherman commanded an army of 60,000 men, whereas the various Confederate forces that were fitfully thrown against him numbered fewer than 15,000. His celebrated march to the sea was therefore not a very gallant feat of arms; it was a terror war against women, children, buildings, books, and chickens. Sherman wanted to punish the South and to end the war, so he turned his tough western troops loose to burn and loot. It was not he who was cruel, he argued. It was war. Harry Truman said the same thing about Hiroshima. Neither man was at his most admirable in thus passing the buck to an abstraction.

Burke Davis is an experienced and capable writer who sometimes indulges a weakness for military cliché of the " . . . dawn of Sunday, March 19, was bright and clear" variety. As a biographer and analyst, however, he is much too cautious. He does not attempt a sustained portrait of General Sherman; nor does he explore the moral and political issues raised by the march; nor, on a more abstract plane, does he deal with the march as a prototypical event, a premonition of the age of total war. His accomplishment is more modest. He simply presents Sherman from the point of view of his men and of the southerners through whose towns and villages his army swept like a chastisement sent by the implacable god of force.

Jack Beatty

Correspondence, *from page 3*

Senate shall choose the Vice President" (Amendment XII, United States Constitution). There may be a deadlock in the presidential election, but since the vice president is selected by a majority of the Senate from between the two highest electoral college vote-getters, there seems to be very little possibility that such a deadlock would occur in selecting a vice president.

The "Tip O'Neill Option" that Lawrence White speaks of is even more remote than White would have us believe.

Gene Karp
Takoma, Washington

Author's query

With the authorization of his estate, I am preparing a collection of Raymond Chandler's letters for publication by the Columbia University Press. I should appreciate hearing from those who have letters that might be included in this collection.

Frank MacShane
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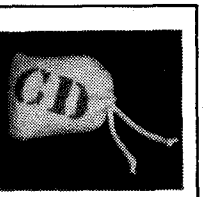

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Washington Diarist

Sand

In all my years roaming the desert, I have never been picked up by a princess cruising in a Cadillac. But this has long been an idle fantasy of mine, especially late in the day when I am pouring the sand out of my wingtips and wondering whether the nomadic lifestyle is really all that satisfying. So I was delighted to learn that such things really do go on. If "Death of a Princess" had been on one of the commercial networks, I never would have believed it. But coming as it did on public TV, we must accept it as literally true in all its details. Highly educational. Tuning in, I anticipated the desert pickup episode with even more scholarly excitement than the decapitation scene. Unfortunately, I was doing the ironing and couldn't give the show my full attention. (When will they develop a Perma-press burnoose?) The sandy carpooling scene came and went so fast that I missed most of it. All too soon we were back to the dominant motif of the show: scenes of a television reporter interviewing people. In this respect the program revealed more about Western culture than it did about that of the Arabs. The hubris of journalists in the West has risen to the point where they think people would rather watch actors playing reporters plying their trade than see portrayals of sex and violence. There were interviews in every known position: on-the-record, off-the-record, over dinner, over drinks, by telephone, and so on. I skipped the finale of allegedly genuine journalists sitting around a table and opining. That is Mort Kondracke's fantasy, not mine.

David Rockefeller has given a speech insisting that the Trilateral Commission is not a conspiracy, thereby confirming all suspicions that it must be one. Rockefeller's hilarious attempt at bland reassurance illustrates how hopeless it is to deny that one is part of a conspiracy, especially if one is David Rockefeller. (On the other hand, silence is also suspicious.) The TC, says Rockefeller, is nothing more than "a group of private citizens with an intense interest in global affairs" brought together by himself "to put their minds to the larger issues." It is not an organ of the Eastern Establishment, he says, because it includes Californians like Caspar Weinberger and Arjay Miller. The fact that many former Commission members, such as Jimmy Carter, now run the country is merely "gratifying and not surprising," since membership has always been restricted to "outstanding citizens," and they must resign when they take their government posts. Closed meetings? These are merely "to encourage lively and uninhibited debate and a full exchange of views." And if you're still convinced that the TC is just a harmless collection of hot air virtuosos, consider Rockefeller's self-defeating peroration: "My point is that far from being a coterie of international conspirators with designs on covertly ruling the world, the Trilateral Commission is, in reality, a group of concerned citizens interested in fostering greater understanding and cooperation among international allies." At this point I was becoming truly alarmed. And when I noted that this speech, reprinted in the *Wall Street Journal* (!), had been delivered to something called the Los Angeles World Affairs Council (!!), I became certain that the Trilateral Commission must have been responsible for the Kennedy assassination, and probably the disappearance of Judge Crater as well.

Our man at the semiannual meeting of a similar, indeed overlapping, conspiracy, the Business Council, reports that Irving Shapiro, chairman of DuPont and leading exponent of the corporate viewpoint, expressed pleasure at a recent *TNR* editorial saying that profits are generally a good thing. (See Walter Shapiro's dispatch on page 12.) Shapiro (Irving), says Shapiro (Walter), did not even mind the snide personal attack on him that came later in the same editorial. One of the greatest disappointments that can befall any journalist is to discover that the target of a personal attack did not mind it. (Just as it takes all the fun out of being an editor to be told, as the writer hands you a manuscript, "Do anything you want to this. I have no ego attached.") Shapiro's reaction to our editorial naturally brings to mind FDR's famous remark that he didn't resent attacks on himself or his wife or his children but did object to criticism of "my little dog, Fala." Say what you wish about Irving Shapiro. Just don't criticize profits.

Perhaps Irving Shapiro, in graciously absorbing snipes from *TNR*, is only practicing the latest executive style, which, according to the *Washington Post*, is something called "androgynous management." Naturally there is a consultant behind this one. If the deadpan *Post* story can be believed, she hires herself out to corporations and federal agencies to train executives "to develop behaviors traditionally assigned to the opposite sex." This consultant (who has written a book called *Beyond Sex Roles* and another one called *Androgynous Management*) claims to know of a top executive who was passed over for promotion three times because he "wasn't into showing tenderness and vulnerability." (Irving Shapiro, by contrast, tendered his way to the top.) The *Post* reports one of Ms. Androgyny's amazing successes: "She recently lectured a three-week class on management skills to supergrade federal employees at the Federal Executive Institute in Charlottesville. During the noontime volleyball breaks, the GS-15s through 18s at first transferred their office-hour competitiveness, she says, to the playing ground. But after awhile (sic), they asked if there was some way they could revise the rules to be more collaborative and less competitive." The *Post* does not report what happened next, but we can guess. An inter-agency task force was appointed to draft revised rules for noontime volleyball at the Federal Executive Institute. Consultants were hired and input was sought from the American Volleyball Association. The draft rules were published in the *Federal Register* with a request for comment within 90 days from interested parties. The comment deadline was postponed twice. After hearings and further deliberation, the rules were issued and immediately appealed to federal court, which rejected them for failure to file an environmental impact statement. Meanwhile, the *Post* reports, our consultant claims her ideas "have been well received at some agencies which might be considered 'the most macho-oriented' in the federal government." This must explain reports that males on the staff of the American Battle Monuments Commission have taken to carrying purses and wearing lipstick. Anything to get ahead.

M.E.K.

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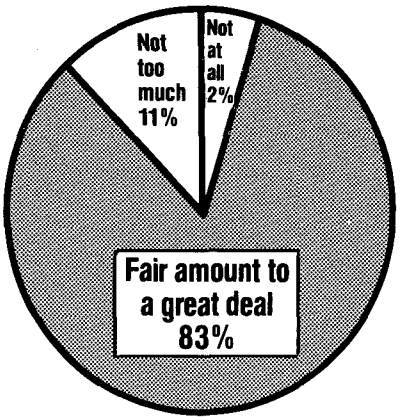
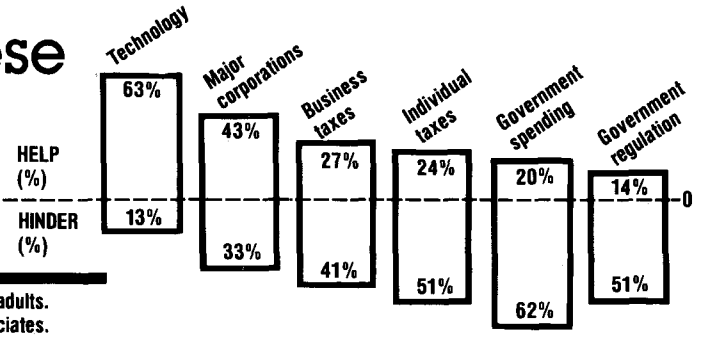


Q: Does each of these help or hinder economic growth?

Note: These are six of thirteen items tested in this question.



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AMERICANS REJECT NO-GROWTH FUTURE...

see technology and business as forces for growth.

In a new public attitude survey conducted for Union Carbide by Roger Seasonwein Associates, Americans express overwhelming support for economic growth. They see technology and business as leading generators of the growth they desire.

The survey reveals that Americans associate growth with higher standards of living and better jobs, and they view inflation, big government and energy as the major forces holding back growth.

Various proposals to help restore economic growth are now under consideration in both houses of Congress and in the Administration. Some measures, for example, would limit government spending to a certain percentage of GNP, thereby restraining inflation and restoring the economic stability necessary for expanded capital investment by business. The Capital Cost Recovery Act would also encourage the creation of new plants and jobs by reducing business taxes through liberalized depreciation schedules. And there is growing recognition of the need to reduce the cost and uncertainty of government regulation.

Government has no higher priority in the 1980's than reducing inflation and restoring real growth in the economy. In the present climate, the 'growth/no growth' debate is moot for most Americans. The issue now is how America's policymakers can point the nation toward the non-inflationary growth its people want.

How to get a copy of the complete growth survey:

For a copy of the 92 page report
write "Growth Survey"
Union Carbide Corporation
Box TNR-43, 270 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

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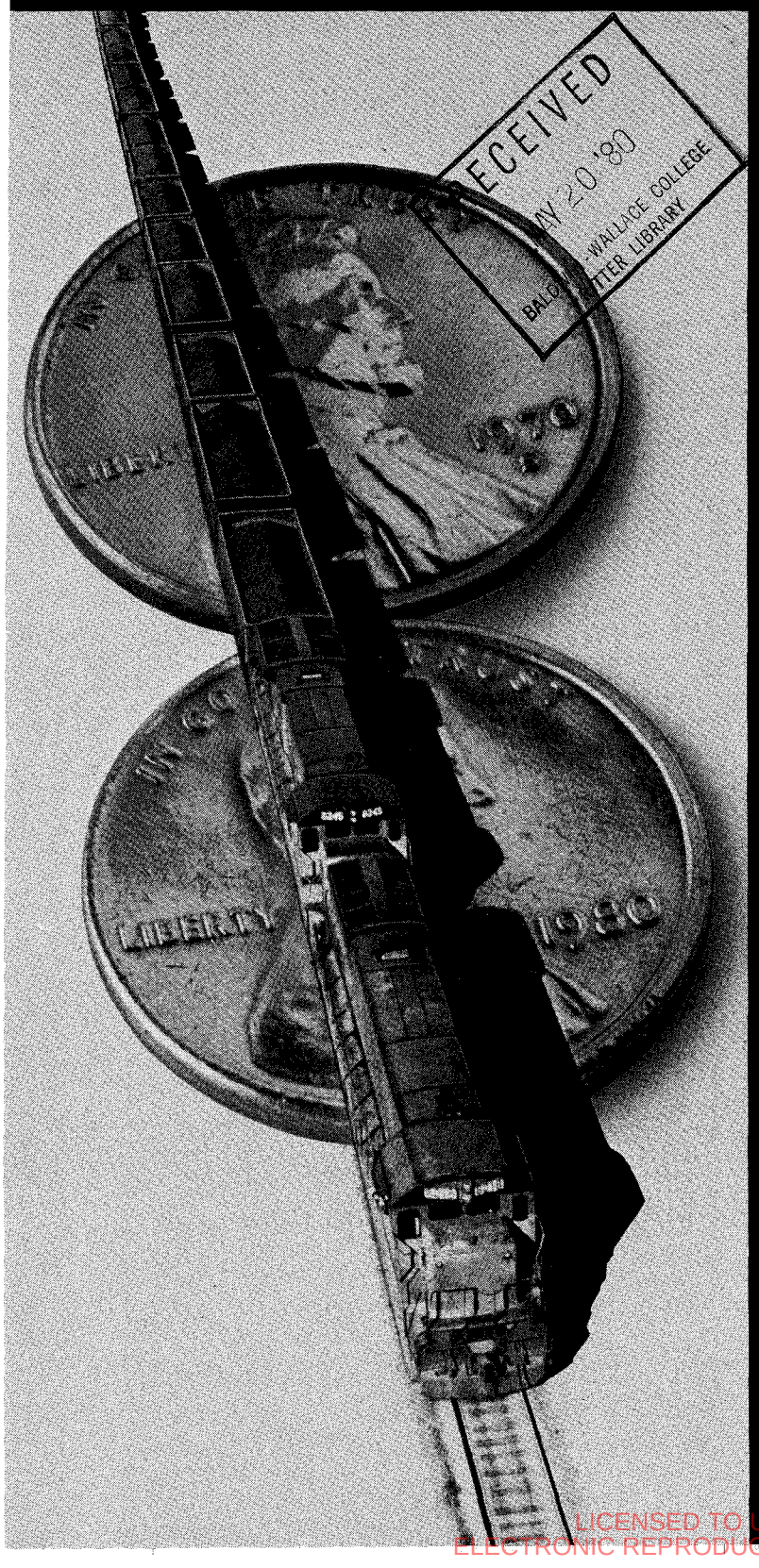
Myth:
Railroads charge too much to move coal.



Fact:
Rail costs are a smaller share of the delivered price of coal today than they were 10 years ago.

The United States has enough coal to break our energy dependence on imported oil. Now, when this vital resource is needed more than ever, America's freight railroads are being accused of charging too much to move coal, thus impeding the nation's shift from oil to coal.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Coal prices and electric utility rates have risen much faster than railroad coal rates. Ten years ago, rail transportation charges averaged 39 percent of the delivered price of coal. Today, they average only 25 percent of the delivered price.

Naturally, specific rates may be higher or lower than average depending on such factors as the distance the coal is moved.

America's freight railroads are the most reliable and cost-efficient way to move most coal from where it's mined to where it's needed—to generate electricity and fuel our industries. Today, that's more important than ever.

For more information, write: Coal, Dept. W, Association of American Railroads, American Railroads Building, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Surprise:
Railroads move a ton of coal for an average charge of less than 2¢ a mile.

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